

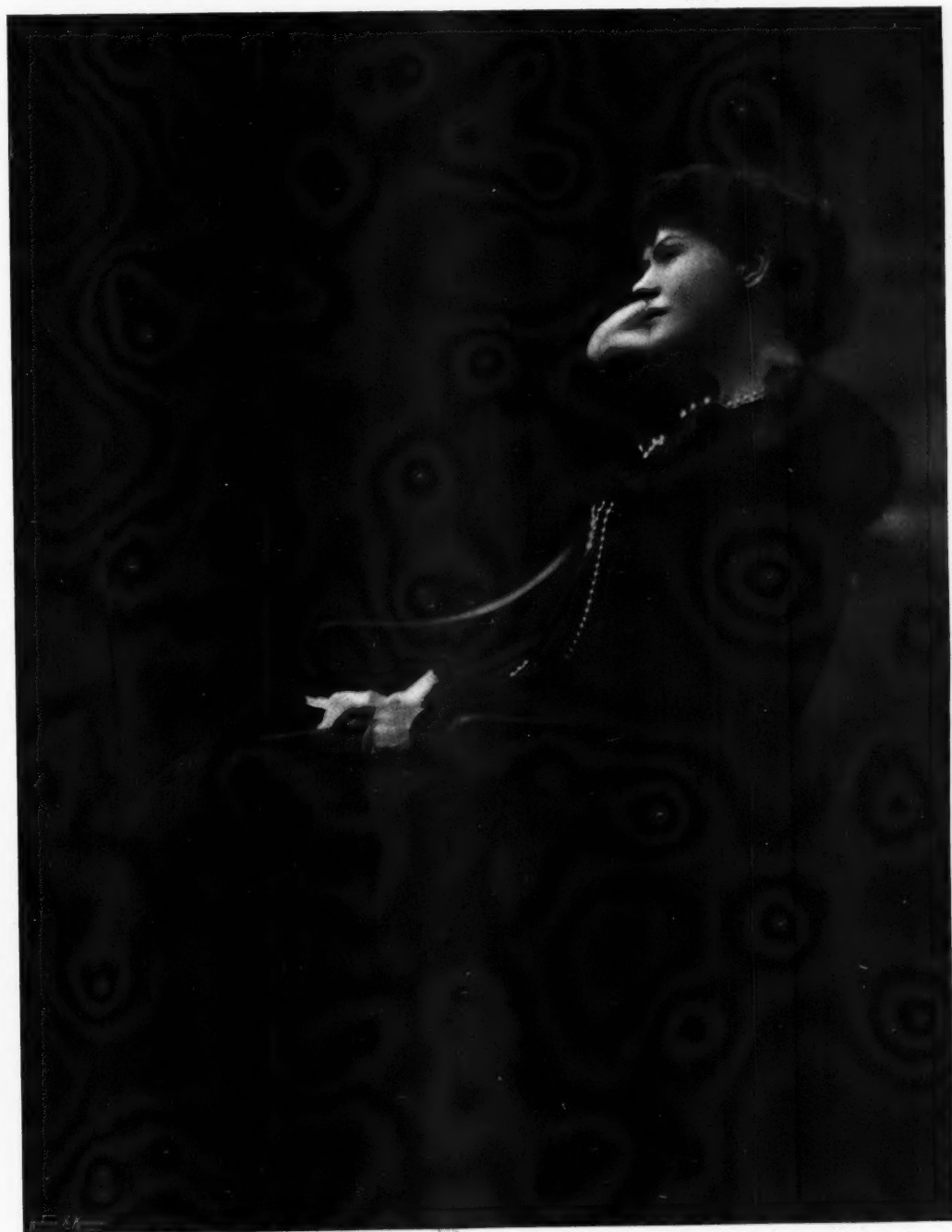
COUNTRY LIFE

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H. S. MENDELSSOHN.

THE DUCHESS OF SUTHERLAND.

14, Fembridge Crescent.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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THE PURITY OF CIDER.

A FEW days ago an influential deputation of cider-makers attended at the Board of Trade in order to explain certain grievances which they considered removable. These certainly deserved attention. One complaint especially might be brought forward by many other industries. It is that those who do not and cannot produce a genuine article very often offer their customers an imitation which they recommend as being equally good. But cider is an easily-defined product. In its pure condition it consists exclusively of the juice of the apple, and nothing needs to be added to it unless it be an artificial ferment. The so-called natural ferment has for a long time been discarded by the best makers, and the process followed is that the juice of the apple is pasteurised and an artificial ferment added. The object of this is to bring the liquid under better control. The old farmhouse cider was more or less a creature of accident, and might be either over-fermented or under-fermented, whereas in the scientifically-made cider of to-day the proportion of alcohol can be determined beforehand. But this is a very different matter from making a substance which approximates to the taste and appearance of cider and yet does not consist of apple juice. The investigations made by the National Fruit and Cider Institute show that many colourable imitations are on sale, and that some of them, at least, are detrimental to the health of the consumers. The cider-makers then are more than justified in demanding that a careful surveillance should be

exercised by the Board of Trade, and that it ought to be an offence to sell for cider any concoction that would not be recognised by the National Fruit and Cider Institute. The principle is applied in regard to many other products, and, therefore, no new privilege or protection is being asked. Indeed, the net effect is only to guard the public from having foisted upon them a substance which is not what it pretends to be. Probably there are few cyclists who could not supply an apt illustration of these comments. There is no beverage more welcome to the traveller on wheels than a glass of pure cider, and on those roads where the inns have attempted to keep it on tap the custom has been enormous. But when the thirsty traveller, instead of the pure juice of the apple, is offered some sweet and sickly concoction under the same name, he is apt to forswear for ever the more innocuous drink, and return to the bitter beer or whisky and soda of a less enlightened period in his life.

Another grievance under which the cider-makers writhe is that the railway companies show no reasonableness in the charges they make for carriage. One of the cider-makers present at the deputation the other day gave as an example his having had to pay 30s. a ton for the carriage of apples that cost him only 20s. to buy, while the cases in which the carriage and actual cost exactly balance one another are quite numerous. To this, of course, the railway companies have a stereotyped answer. In the first place, they demand the full truck, and in the second a regular traffic, before they will consent to give moderate prices. Of course it is difficult for an outsider to teach them their business, but one comes across very extraordinary instances of the effects. For example, some little time ago a quantity of beech timber was sold at Ventnor to a Buckinghamshire man. He made many enquiries of the railway companies as to terms of carriage, but finally worked it out that it was cheaper to cart the timber from Ventnor to High Wycombe than to send it by rail. Within a forty-mile radius of London there are scores of farmers who find that it is cheaper to cart their hay into London than to use the agency of the railway companies. This cannot be described as a satisfactory state of things. After all, the railway companies enjoy a monopoly, and if they cannot do anything for the convenience of the public in return, it would only seem reasonable that they should be made to pay more for it. The cider-makers, of course, cannot possibly guarantee a regular traffic. It is calculated that only once in five years is there a glut of apples. When the season does happen to be a remarkably good one, it is in the interests of all that a great quantity of cider should be made. Apple wine, like that from the grape, does not deteriorate, but improves, through keeping, and therefore the country can scarcely be overstocked. When there is a glut of apples, it is certainly to the public advantage that the cider-press should be as busy as possible. But the toll exacted by the railway companies renders it extremely difficult to achieve this result. The question has come up in so many different forms that the answer to one profession would probably be found in the end to be the answer to several others. The general fruit-growers are as indignant as the cider-makers. They say that the transport of fruit to the London market altogether destroys the profit and throws the trade into the arms of our foreign competitors. To all this the railway companies return the very same arguments that they did to the deputation of cider-makers. They have got into their heads such parrot cries as the full truck and regular traffic, and these constitute the only reply they design to offer.

In the case of cider a more than usually strong argument can be brought forward. By general consent it is admitted that we in this country drink more than our fair share of intoxicating liquor. We are not here to advocate teetotalism. Beer is good in its place, whisky is good, brandy is good, wines are good; but they are all liable to abuse, and no defence can be offered for their consumption in excess. Nevertheless, it is not by preaching and exhortation that a change is likely to be made. Far more effective in all likelihood would be the substitution of a healthful and innocuous drink, like cider, for more noxious beverages. At any rate, it is a very suitable drink for the hot season of the year and for people who are travelling. Moreover, it is a native product, and its manufacture, therefore, is deserving of support from many different points of view. Its consumption is conducive to public health, as its manufacture is to the welfare of our own people.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Her Grace the Duchess of Sutherland. The Duchess is a daughter of the late Earl of Rosslyn, and her marriage to the Duke of Sutherland took place in 1884.

* * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens, or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



COUNTRY NOTES.

THE PRINCE OF WALES has very frequently shown an aptitude for saying the right thing at the right moment; but never did he do so to more purpose than in his speech at the annual meeting of the Royal Navy Fund. He recalled the fact that it was just thirty years since he himself joined the Navy, and then proceeded to tell the meeting that he was sending his eldest son to Osborne College if he passed the examination as he hoped he would. Then he went on to say that although it was just within the bounds of possibility that his heir might not be able to make the Navy his career, he trusted to be able to put one of his other children into it. Nothing could have been more appropriate to the occasion. The Prince of Wales in due time, though we hope that the end of King Edward's reign is far distant, will be King of England, and nothing could be more right and proper than that the Sovereign of the greatest Sea Power in the world should have a son devoted to the Navy.

The present season has already been disagreeably marked by the occurrence of dreadful catastrophes by land and sea. One of the most terrible was described in the newspapers of March 12th. It was the explosion on board the *Iéna*, a French battle-ship lying at the time at Toulon. This was a modern battle-ship of 12,000 tons with engines of 16,500 horse-power. The *Iéna* was Admiral Manceron's flagship. Of the crew of about 700 a considerable number were killed outright, but the latest reports speak of 350 men saved. Very great sympathy will be felt with the French people in this serious misfortune. A battle-ship is in these days a national possession of great value, and it is impossible to feel anything but pity and regret for the brave men forced to meet death as the result of an inglorious accident. When we remember that Admiral Togo's flagship met with a similar fate, it is impossible not to view the recurrence of such accidents with uneasiness and apprehension. The intricate machinery of a battle-ship seems to lend itself easily to an accident.

Never have Indian rites and ceremonies attracted more attention than those with which Prince Ranjitsinhji made his state entry into Jamnagar. The hero of the moment has been well accustomed to great receptions, only those he received in England were somewhat different from those of his native country. Here a huge cricket crowd used to roar a hearty welcome as he strode to the pitch in pads and gloves. Everyone knew that he would provide a delightful exhibition of batting, but no one knew the time nor the hour at which he would beat his own or other people's records. At Jamnagar very different crowds thronged the roofs of the houses and gathered round the palace. Prince Ranjitsinhji himself in robes richly embroidered with gold and sparkling with jewels took part in the religious ceremony proper to the occasion, and was addressed by Mr. Fitzgerald, Agent to the Bombay Government, who fittingly represented Great Britain on the occasion. The Prince himself characteristically declared that he would always play the game, and promised unswerving loyalty to Great Britain. Little could it have been expected, when Prince Ranjitsinhji was winning renown in the English cricket-field, and in that way making the acquaintance of English people of all classes, that the knowledge thus acquired would come in so opportunely in the government of an Indian State.

It is to be hoped that the new Companies' Bill will engage the attention of the Government during the present session. It is under the charge of Lord Granard, and is founded on the recommendations of the Departmental Committee of the Board of Trade for 1905. One of the principal objects is to introduce greater strictness into the drawing up and preparation of prospectuses. At present fraudulent promoters not infrequently avoid the law by refusing to lodge a prospectus at all. It is proposed that in future, if a prospectus is not issued, there must be filed with the registrar a statement of all those facts which the law would have required to be in the prospectus. So far the company promoter has proved very difficult to catch, and we do not know that this arrangement will embarrass him very much. There are a very considerable number of people who, if they had money to invest, would not think of going to Somerset House for the purpose of making enquiry, even though they knew that information would be at their disposal there. Besides, they may have had some experience of the present arrangements. One cannot learn very much about a doubtful company from official sources, as the promoters generally know how to keep the letter of the law while breaking it in the spirit.

The obituary of the week contains the death of Lord Penrhyn, best known to fame, perhaps, on account of the sturdy fight he made against the trades unionists in South Wales. He had, however, many other claims to attention, inasmuch as he was an excellent landlord, a keen sportsman and a zealous politician. Perhaps, to some extent, his manner was against him, and from his Welsh neighbours he scarcely received the justice that was his due; but even those opposed to him never questioned his title to respect. Another important figure that has passed away is that of Sir Thomas Hanbury, who was well known for his philanthropic work in Italy. His Italian residence, La Mortola, had an intense interest for lovers of flowers, and horticulturists have not forgotten his munificent gift to the Royal Horticultural Society of the late Mr. G. E. Wilson's garden at Wisley in Surrey.

THE WEST WIND.

The tree-tops whisper—they're all astir,
Lo! a west wind blows!
The flowers are coming to scent the air
For a west wind blows!
And the skies spread blue and all hearts wax light,
And the earth grows soft as the frosts take flight,
See the dawn of spring breaks from winter's light
When a west wind blows!

LUCY LEGGE SYMES.

During its progress, it has been our business on several occasions to direct attention to the match for the chess championship of the world between Dr. Lasker and J. F. Marshall. The struggle is turning out a very long and arduous one. So far Marshall has not scored a single victory, and yet it is no paradox to say that he has added more to his reputation than Dr. Lasker has done. The latest of the games to hand, viz., the tenth of the match, played at Baltimore, shows the American champion in his very best light. He played with an almost unsurpassable ingenuity, and if to his brilliance he had added a touch of the safe and sure methods of the Vienna school, he would undoubtedly have beaten the present champion. It would almost appear as though his play were improving with the progress of the match, and though we cannot anticipate his final triumph, it is very evident that he is not going to leave the field with discredit.

Professor Long, we notice, has been writing in a contemporary in regard to the possibility of three acres supporting a family. As it happens, a lady gardener had just before that been giving her experience in another paper. She and her sister were very well able to make a fair living out of less land; but experience showed them that the money could be most easily obtained out of the glasshouse. They grew tomatoes, peaches, grapes, figs and cucumbers, while as auxiliary sources of income the lady enumerates the growing of flowers for cutting and of ferns and foliage plants. Of course, there is nothing very new in all that. There are many market gardeners living on the outskirts of London whose experience has been identical with that of this lady. Mr. Jesse Collings tells us of a labourer who received £600 in a single year for the produce of less than thirty acres, and if we calculate that £360 of that was profit, the man with three acres might get a living wage, though no more. As C. Furius Chrisimus, a freed-man mentioned by Pliny, says, the profits of a small holding are those of "early watchings, vigils, and the sweat of my brow." To this the modern might add "a good market," and the argument is finished.

The enquiries that have recently been made about lady gardeners deserve some notice. We are afraid that the calling does not flourish quite so well as was once expected and prophesied.

But surely the reason is not difficult to find. It is not very easy to define the lady gardener's sphere of action. Very few indeed of those who maintain great gardens would be content to have a lady as head-gardener. In fact, there is little scope for her in that direction. That numerous class also who have not means enough to engage a gardener regularly, but employ one for two or three days a week, do not want a woman, for the simple reason that she does not possess the physical strength necessary for their purpose. Here then are two fields of action ruled out of her sphere—the two extremes, as it were, of the situation. We do not speak absolutely, because here and there an exception may occur to the general rule. But at the same time we are convinced that our remarks must be all but universally applicable.

There remains, then, what we may call the middle class of garden-owners. These will be found in large numbers around our great towns. They take a house and a garden in the country, and are too much immersed in business to attend to it themselves. They would prefer to have a lady gardener, for the simple reason that she belongs to their class, has a sense of responsibility and in many cases has been carefully trained in economy, all of which are weighty considerations in the minds of those who probably have to spend most of their time in the city and are compelled to trust to the intelligence and honesty of those whom they employ. But, then, the lady gardener is too nice and fastidious. She has been taught to plan and to perform the slighter and more elegant work of gardening, but for the rest she needs a man to perform the heavier tasks. Thus those who would employ her are brought face to face with the fact that if they carry out their wishes they must engage two gardeners where they did not intend to have more than one. Hence another difficulty in the way of the lady gardener finding employment.

The question for women to consider, then, is whether it would not be worth while for them to attempt the manual labour. No doubt there are numbers to whom the question would be superfluous. They—the more intelligent—probably find employment as lecturers to County Councils, or work out their own salvation by starting little market gardens for cut flowers and greenhouse fruits. But there must be many other women who are strong enough to do the ordinary work of the garden and who would be glad to earn their livelihood in this healthy manner if there were openings for them. We are sure that there are thousands of people now in the habit of employing that most unsatisfactory of all servants, the jobbing gardener, who would gladly put a woman in his place if they could find one suitable to the purpose.

One of the most important events of the coming season will be the show of horses at Olympia; but it may be just as well for the public not to try and anticipate the verdict of the judges. A few days ago there was quite an excitement about the landing of certain American horses belonging to Mr. Vanderbilt, and it was freely said that these animals would easily beat their English competitors in the show-yard. Expert examination of the horses does not confirm that view. We have not ourselves seen them, but those who have do not hold them equal to those of English breeding. No doubt they are out of condition after their long voyage; but critics who know anything about horses are able to make due allowance for that, and the verdict so far is that the American thorough-bred is rather coarse, and not likely to compete successfully with the best from our own stables. However that may be, it will be very interesting to compare the different breeds when they appear at the show-yard at Olympia.

Despite the popularity of the motor, the keenest interest continues to be taken in our horses, and the series of shows which concluded with that of the thorough-bred stallions has been entirely successful. Indeed, the last was the only one which showed any signs of weakness. The exhibition of Shires was excellent and that of Hackneys much above the average, but in the thorough-breds a certain lightness and want of bone were noticeable. This, however, is easily accounted for. The best thorough-breds are in our racing stables, and the owners would never dream of showing them. In the class for the East Coast District, extending from London as far as Norfolk, only two of the competitors were found good enough for premiums. At the meeting of the Hunters' Improvement Society, which was held during the course of the show, Prince Christian pleaded very strongly for the discontinuance of the practice of "docking" and "hogging."

The black lark (*Melanocorypha yeltonensis*) was formally placed on the list of British birds at the last meeting of the British Ornithologists Club, when three examples of this species, which had recently been obtained, were exhibited. Two of these, a

male, shot near Pevensey, Sussex, on January 29th, 1907, and a female, killed at Lydd, Kent, two days later, were exhibited by Mr. C. B. Ticehurst. The third specimen was also a male and killed at Rye on February 16th. This species, of course, can only be regarded as an accidental visitor to Great Britain, and it is improbable that it will ever be anything more, since its native habitat appears to be Turkestan, whence it sometimes strays into Russia. Occasionally, probably, only when driven by stress of weather, it wanders further afield, as examples have been recorded from Austria, Belgium and Heligoland. The occurrence of this species on our shores certainly seems to have been due to atmospheric disturbances, since both frost and gales of exceptional severity prevailed during January. While the female might very well pass—to the uninitiated—for a common skylark, the male differs remarkably, having a black livery, obscured during the autumn and winter by rusty brown fringes to the tips of the feathers. The short claw of the hind toe, however, readily distinguishes the female from the skylark.

The modern craze for mezzotints has received a curious illustration in the sale of those left by the late Sir Wilfrid Lawson. He himself, no doubt, would have been surprised at the excitement caused, as he set no extraordinary store by these engravings. Indeed, many of them have been put aside in large books, and in some cases have their margins trimmed to suit the size of the binding. Yet the keenest competition has gone on for their possession. For example, the engraving by Valentine Green of Sir Joshua's Lady Jane Halliday produced a struggle between the great dealers, which ended in its being secured by the Messrs. Agnew for the unrivalled price of 820 guineas. Yet this is only an example of the many sensational prices obtained during the course of the sale, which is in the way of realising a fortune. To enumerate only one or two of the prices, Lady Louisa Manners was purchased by Messrs. Colnaghi for £670. The same buyers gave £410 for another engraving. It is evident that the Lawson sale is one likely to endure in memory. We write before the completion of the sale, but, when all the pictures have been disposed of, it will be interesting indeed to compare the prices at which sales have been effected, with those which were given at the time of their collection. The increase shows the advance of taste.

SONG OF THE MOON.

I set the stars to swinging,
Sweet silver lamps of night,
The music of my singing
Thrall'eth the sons of light.
Men, who must toil in sorrow
Hearing me, are not sad:
Whatever holds to-morrow
My song shall make them glad.
I am the soul of Lilith,
Lilith, the most fair maid—
He the base-born, who tilleth,
Hearing me, is afraid.
Yet some have me for lover,
They that have sailed the seas:
Truly they shall discover
All my white mysteries.
They see the deep eyes gleaming
Out of my round of white,
Their eyes are set to dreaming,
Hearing my song by night.

ETHEL TALBOT.

It is always well to look on the bright side of things, as far as possible, even if the object of contemplation has as little natural brightness as a London fog, and with regard to these fogs it is quite certain that as the years go on we suffer less and less from them. The really dense and black fog which we used to be called on to endure every winter, when there was a combination of frost and still air, is hardly ever seen now, and year by year the fog plague decreases. It is especially interesting and satisfactory to be able to make this comment at the present moment, because it has been the custom for several years past to say that the reason why we have so comparatively few fogs nowadays was that we had no frost, or virtually none, in the winter. That is a charge that cannot be brought against the present one. We have had quite as much frost as we care about, yet still we have had a comparative immunity from fog. The pleasing conclusion seems to be that we must look for the cause of the diminished fog among some circumstances more likely to be permanent than the mere accidental differences of winter climate, and by far the most probable cause appears to be the improved and constantly improving drainage of those low grounds by the river to the east of London, which were, without doubt, the great manufactories of the fogs from which London used to suffer so much.

It is very characteristic of the British temperament, with its faculty for "muddling through," to cherish something very like contempt for theories and statistics; yet we cannot doubt but that there will be general satisfaction with the favourable reception given by the Prime Minister to the deputation of scientific persons who waited on him lately with a proposal for the accurate measurement, and recording of its results, of the children in schools and of 3 per cent. of adults every ten years, in order to attain some reliable facts in connection with that national physical degeneration of which we hear so much, yet really know so little. The cost—£5,000, as an outside estimate—of this decennial census does not seem excessive in consideration of the value of the statistics which it would furnish. The proportional chest measurements and other points of symmetry in the human figure are obviously of greater importance in the question than simple stature or bulk, for in spite of a great deal of loose talk about the under-sized specimens of the race which are stated to result from life in cities, it is quite certain that effectiveness in the modern struggle for existence is not determined by these

factors. Even if abundance of other evidence to the contrary were not forthcoming, the issue of the greatest war of modern times would suffice as demonstration.

Catkins of hazel and willow growing to a size which is rather unusual, while there is still such a complete absence of any green leaf, are almost the only signs that spring is with us, and they are the only growth which gives even an occasional tinge of the new green. We must except, of course, the leaves of some varieties of honeysuckle, which are always before the rest. The buds of the so-called "palm" are swollen large and white, but most of the vernal foliage has made no start at all, and little wonder when the frost in the counties south of London was as severe as 12deg. one night last week. It is very well that it was not more forward, or it would have suffered badly. We have learnt to know that an "early spring," as it is called, is not to be desired in the best interests of our flora.

SHOOTING MARKHOR IN CASHMERE.



J. Arbuthnot.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK: A SNOW BRIDGE.

Copyright

YOU will have plenty of climbing if you are going to the Moji Nullah," said a fellow-sportsman whom I met on the march up; and he was right. It is just twenty-nine years since I first went to Cashmere and I have explored a good deal of the country after various sorts of game, but never have I been on ground like the Moji. It is ground that men younger than myself fight shy of; but I wanted a good markhor, and I had reliable information that there were good heads there, so I went. The Moji is an isolated nullah at the back of the Kaj-nag, a district which is closed till April 15th, and even at that time of the year it is pretty hard to get to, as there is a high range of

mountains to be crossed. Fortune favoured me; the very afternoon on which I camped at the foot of the pass the weather changed and, the clouds clearing away, a hard frost set in. By starting at two o'clock a.m. on a fine moonlight morning, when I could swing along over the hard snow without the fatigue of sinking knee deep at every step, the pass was successfully negotiated; and on the evening of April 13th I was camped on the banks of the river Kamit, which bounds the back of the Kaj-nag district. The other side is bounded by the river Jhelum. One is not allowed to enter this district till April 15th, but after midnight on the 14th you may enter into possession of a nullah, and so long as you remain there no one will



J. Arbuthnot.

MOJI NATIVES.

Copyright



J. Arbuthnot.

THE TOP OF THE PASS.

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disturb you. I had my spies out, and as far as my information went there was no one near me; but it is always best to leave nothing to chance, and an hour before daylight I was on the march in a cold searching drizzle which soon after changed into a steady rain. By eleven o'clock I was on my camping ground, and "shooting tenant" (without rent!) of one of the best markhor grounds in Cashmere.

My headquarters established, I proceeded to make myself as comfortable as was possible under the circumstances. There was not much information to be got from the inhabitants of the few huts, which aspired to be a "village," as no one had been up the valley as yet, but on the third day news came in of a big markhor. He was a long way up, and it necessitated a night in my small shelter tent, a light useful little thing I had had made, just large enough to cover me while sleeping on the ground. We saw him right enough and watched him more or less for a week, but in the end had to give him up because it seemed absolutely impossible to get anywhere near the ground on which we used to see him from the other side of the nullah. We saw him feeding in the early morning, but by about eight o'clock he vanished, appearing again about four o'clock p.m., but never could we see exactly where he went or whence he came. There are times, though they are very rare, when a lucky shot may be obtained without necessarily going on to any very bad places, but, as a rule, one has to be on really dangerous ground before the stalk is brought to a

be passed, a very useful dodge is to hang fir branches on one of the shikaris and use him as a stalking-horse, crawling along



J. Arbuthnot.

SOME TROPHIES.

Copyright



J. Arbuthnot.

STALKING BEHIND A LIVING SCREEN.

Copyright

shot, and probably many places have been passed that in cold blood one would shy at. The markhor is not like the ibex, which one can see from afar because he lives among open rocks. The markhor selects rocky forests, and the way in which he manages to conceal himself, large though he is (40in. to 44in. at the shoulder), is wonderful. You may spot him from a distance and watch him with your telescope constantly, and yet he will vanish on what looks fairly open ground, and you may not see him for half-an-hour, when he will suddenly reappear as if he had come out of the ground. The grass shoes of the country are invaluable and without them the climbing would be next door to impossible. The shoeing in the morning is the most important function and always done by the shikaris themselves.

A markhor has wonderful eyesight, and even when he is lying up for the day on some jutting out rock, where he can see everywhere, he is constantly on the watch. If an open piece of ground must

be passed, a very useful dodge is to hang fir branches on one of the shikaris and use him as a stalking-horse, crawling along behind him very slowly; but this only can be successful when you are still a very long way off. I had been three weeks in the Moji before I got my first shot. We had spent the night under a rock in the neighbourhood of which we had seen a very big markhor, and next morning were fortunate enough to spot him feeding. He was so much on the move that a stalk was impossible; consequently we lay and watched him till he selected his mid-day resting-place. We were fortunate enough to be able to locate him exactly, and marked him down near a dead fir tree, an excellent sign-post. The stalk was a long one and it was two and a-half hours before we got into his neighbourhood. Our progress seemed then about to be barred by a bit of cliff which I must say looked impossible, but after a few trial trips my shikaris found a way. It was rough hand and foot cliff climbing, and the finish led up a perpendicular bit of snow which had already separated from the rock, and looked as if it might go at any moment. Standing on the top of this and peeping over a corner of the rock I saw that we had shaped our course well, for there he lay, the finest markhor I had ever seen, and within a hundred yards of me. Trying to steady myself for the shot,

I dislodged the crest of snow and for the moment I thought I was done, but my shikari was ready and caught me; then we got my second shikari wedged in between the snow and the rock, and his shoulder gave me a firm stance for one foot. The rest was simple, and the range being so short I used my .577 Henry's Express, which took him a shade low on the right shoulder—one can never make sure of a shot at an animal lying down somehow. He sprang up and tried to make off, but he got the left barrel right behind the left shoulder, and that finished it. Down he crashed, fortunately falling on the soft snow about 100ft. below, and went sliding away for over a mile. When we got to him about an hour after, for we had to go some way round, we found him with his splendid horns perfectly intact, and the camera was sent for while I sat and gloated over my prize. Full 52in. fair measurement, and one of the thickest horns that have been got for years.

There is no grander trophy to be won in Cashmere than a really fine markhor, and it is well worth all the labour, hardship and fatigue which it costs to get it; but one must be sound in wind and limb and have a steady head. The same week I was given another chance, this time without such a hard stalk, but I had to take the shot at 250yds. range, which I consider much too far for a sporting shot; however, with the help of the flat trajectory of a Rigby Mauser cordite rifle I was successful, and having killed my two markhor, the limit allowed under the Cashmere Game Laws, I left the Moji Nullah and started to look for bears.

J. A.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

IT is a great pleasure to meet and recognise a novel that stands out strong and conspicuous among the publications of the year. This is undoubtedly the case with Mr. John Galsworthy's new book, *The Country House* (Heinemann). It is by no means beyond criticism, but the faults are those that belong to a vigorous individuality and do not detract in any considerable degree from the greatness of the book. To begin with our objections, the title is a misnomer. It is true that much of the action takes place at a country house, but the chief male person in the drama is a man about town and not much else, while if Mrs. Bellew is not a woman about town, one scarcely knows how to describe her. But, indeed, the names form the weakest feature of the book. "Worsted Skeynes" is scarcely a felicitous name for a country mansion, and "Worsted Scotton" is not a happy title for a common. The name of the family who inhabit the mansion is given as Pendyce, apparently for no other purpose than that of allowing the author to make a play about appendicitis. Further, the author seems to have a great many passionate and bitter feelings about many questions of the day, and these occasionally betray him into absurdity. He is above all things a humanitarian, and is never more severe than when

describing the shooting and other sports of the country house. But the following incident that is supposed to occur in a great shoot is really an appeal to the ignorant:

Out of that quivering wood a wounded rabbit stole into the open to die. It lay down on its side on the slope of a tussock of grass, its hind legs drawn under it, its fore legs raised like the hands of a

praying child. Motionless as death, all its remaining life was centered in its black soft eyes. Uncomplaining, ungrudging, unknowing, with that poor soft wandering eye, it was going back to Mother Earth. There Foxleigh, too, some day must go, asking of Nature why she had murdered him.

Animals do not steal into the open but creep into a hole to die, and the entire passage is a mere rhetorical appeal to sentiment. Mr. Galsworthy might just as well have vented his indignation upon the stoat for committing what he calls murder. Indeed, one would have thought it unnecessary to repeat the truism that in

water, in air and on earth life is continually being taken to maintain life. There is an air, too, about his descriptions of the interior of a country house that gives an impression of the writer as of one who has been only a casual looker on and who does not really know the life there. Look, for instance, at this description of the inside of a drawing-room:

The air was drowsy and sweet-scented; a log of cedar-wood had just been put on the fire; the voices of his mother and Mrs. Bellew, talking of what he could not hear, the voices of Lady Malden, Mrs. Brandwhite, and Gerald, discussing some neighbours, of Mrs. Winlow dissenting or assenting in turn, all mingled in a comfortable, sleepy sound, clipped now and then by the voice of General Pendyce calling, "Check!" and of Bee saying, "Oh, uncle!"

A lady at a piano has been singing, and we wonder where on earth she obtained such an execrable version of a very fine ballad:

Oh! had I wist, dear, when ye kist,
That love had been sae false a thing,
I'd closed my lips, ere't came to clips,
And locked 'em wi' a siller pin!
Waly! waly! love is bonnie
When it is early days and new,
But when 'tis old, soon it grows cold,
And fades away like morning dew!

The old words have been frequently quoted in *COUNTRY LIFE*, so that there is no need to give them again, but the version is so absolutely weak that we cannot help reprinting it. Mr. Galsworthy gives no hint that he understands how bad it is. One has only to recall two lines of the ballad to see what a desecration has been committed:

But had I wist, before I kist,
That love had been sae ill to win;

But the main subject of the story is in our opinion objectionable. It follows the lines of those who seem to assume that country houses are simply places at which divorce cases are prepared. The temptress of the tale is a Mrs. Bellew, who is endowed with a kind of miraculous attraction, though it is impossible for an outsider to see whence it arises. Such



J. Arbuthnot. "GOT HIM AT LAST, AND UNINJURED!"

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J. Arbuthnot.

THE 52in. MARKHOR.

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phrases as "the slow mesmerism of her eyes" carry us very little forward, and savour of a kind of writing that we ought not to find in the pages of Mr. Galsworthy. Moreover, she does not belong to the lane but to the street, not to the country house but to the town flat. The infatuation of George Pendyce for her does not in our opinion arise naturally. It is a state of affairs that was unnecessary to the working out of his plot by the author, and consequently he does not develop it with sure and beautiful skill. The woman's husband, a drunken scapegrace, not without a savour of grace, is conventional in a certain class of fiction, but not altogether bad or incredible. Gregory, or Grig, as he is familiarly called, reminds us of the story of the water poet, who, after he had been at a Scotch merry-making and had to go home on the back of his horse, was found lying in the gutter and muttering to himself, "Oh Lady Mary, dear Lady Mary, when you are good, you are too good." He had prayed for strength to keep on his horse, and the Virgin had answered his prayer so effectually that he went over on the other side. Old Grig is too good. When these faults are arrayed the reader may begin to ask why we have formed such a very favourable opinion of the novel. We cannot help thinking, however, that every reader of discrimination will agree with our verdict. In the first place, Mr. Galsworthy has gone out among the men and women of his own time looking for the things that have not been seen by other eyes and honestly rendering his version of what he beheld. In the second place, behind all this grime and convention there lies a conception as beautiful and poetic as we have found in modern fiction, and this is the character of Mrs. Pendyce. In regard to her he may have come to ban, but he remains to bless. In fact, the character of Mrs. Pendyce is a vindication of the whole order that is attacked so bitterly. Mr. Galsworthy explains that her life's training was carried on with the object in view of saving other people trouble and worry. And he does not assert that this is individual, but that it is the very essence of the teaching of the class.

In Margery Pendyce (who had been a Totteridge) there was no irascible and acrid 'people's blood,' no fierce misgivings, no ill-digested beer and cider—it was pure claret in her veins—she had nothing thick and angry in her soul to help her; that which she had resolved she must carry out, by virtue of a thin, fine flame, breathing far down in her—so far that nothing could extinguish it, so far that it had little warmth.

He goes on to tell us of her instinct of "in me something beyond me," and "though she was far from knowing this, that *something* was her country's civilisation, its very soul, the meaning of it all—gentleness, balance." Rather than give up her erring son,

she resolves to leave the husband with whom she had lived in happiness all her adult life, and she does it, not as a theatrical foolish egotist would have done, but, on the contrary, as quietly as was possible.

So, when the morning came of age and it was time to rise, by no action, look, or sign, did she betray the presence of the unusual in her soul. If this which was before her must be done, it would be carried out as though it were of no import, as though it were a daily action; nor did she force herself to quietude, or pride herself thereon, but acted thus from instinct, the instinct for avoiding fuss and unnecessary suffering that was bred in her.

Our author continues:

Just as there was nothing violent in her manner of taking this step, so there was nothing violent in her conception of it. To her it was not running away, a setting of her husband at defiance; there was no concealment of address, no melodramatic "I cannot come back to you." Such methods, such pistol-holdings, would have seemed to her ridiculous.

She fares forth then to meet the son who has fallen into the toils of Mrs. Bellew; but it is only to meet with disappointment, because George, manlike, sides with his father. But Mrs. Pendyce overcomes her scruples so far as to visit the siren herself, and is more than surprised to find that the fickle jade has flung him from her. Thus Mrs. Pendyce meets with nothing but disappointment until she comes to Captain Bellew himself, and we cannot help giving the end of her interview with him:

Bellew dashed his hand across his brow.

"Well, I will!" he said, "for your sake. There's my hand on it. You're the only lady I know."

He gripped her gloved fingers, brushed past her, and she saw that she was alone.

She found her own way out, with the tears running down her face. Very gently she shut the hall door.

"My poor dress!" she thought. "I wonder if I might stand here a little? The rain looks nearly over!"

The purple cloud had passed, and sunk behind the house, and a bright white sky was pouring down a sparkling rain; a patch of deep blue showed behind the fir trees in the drive. The thrushes were out already after worms. A squirrel scampering along a branch stopped and looked at Mrs. Pendyce, and Mrs. Pendyce looked absently at the squirrel from behind the little handkerchief with which she was drying her eyes.

"That poor man!" she thought—"poor solitary creature! There's the sun."

These are disjointed notes; but the reader of discernment will do well to get the book and fill in the complete picture. He will find himself, before getting to the end of the volume, in a mood to forgive all the peccadilloes which we enumerated at the beginning.

SHIRE HORSE BREEDING.

THE recent remarkably good sales of Shires at Sandringham and Dunsmore, and also during last week at the Agricultural Hall, have revealed the fact that Shires have not only recovered from the depreciation in value which they have suffered from during the past seven or eight years,

but that they are, it may be said, "booming." The best specimens of mares and fillies now readily fetch from 200 to 500 or 600 guineas, while for a good, typical, sound, weighty stallion there is a great demand, and 800 guineas was realised at His Majesty's sale for one fine specimen of the breed.

I was much struck with the big attendances of eager buyers at each of the recent sales; there was a good business tone about them which augurs well, and a brisk demand; bidders were numerous and bids came freely, while a gratifying symptom was the appearance of new buyers, who were apparently willing to give good prices to secure what they required for the formation of new studs. There are many reasons adduced for this recovery in the Shire horse trade, but to my mind the chief reason is the widespread interest taken in the premier breed of draught horses by the tenant farmers of the country. In nearly every county of England and in the adjoining Principality of Wales there has been during the last ten years a great accession of tenant farmers to the ranks of Shire breeders, a great many of whom have become members of the Shire Horse Society, and with this increase of breeders there has sprung into existence a great number of local societies, formed for the purpose of hiring a good stallion for the use of members, with the result that a demand for stallions has been created which is difficult to supply, and, in consequence, competition is very keen for good ones, and, therefore, prices must perforce increase. It is a question of demand and supply. That the Shire horse breeding industry is commercially upon such



F. Babbage.

BIRDSALL MENESTREL.

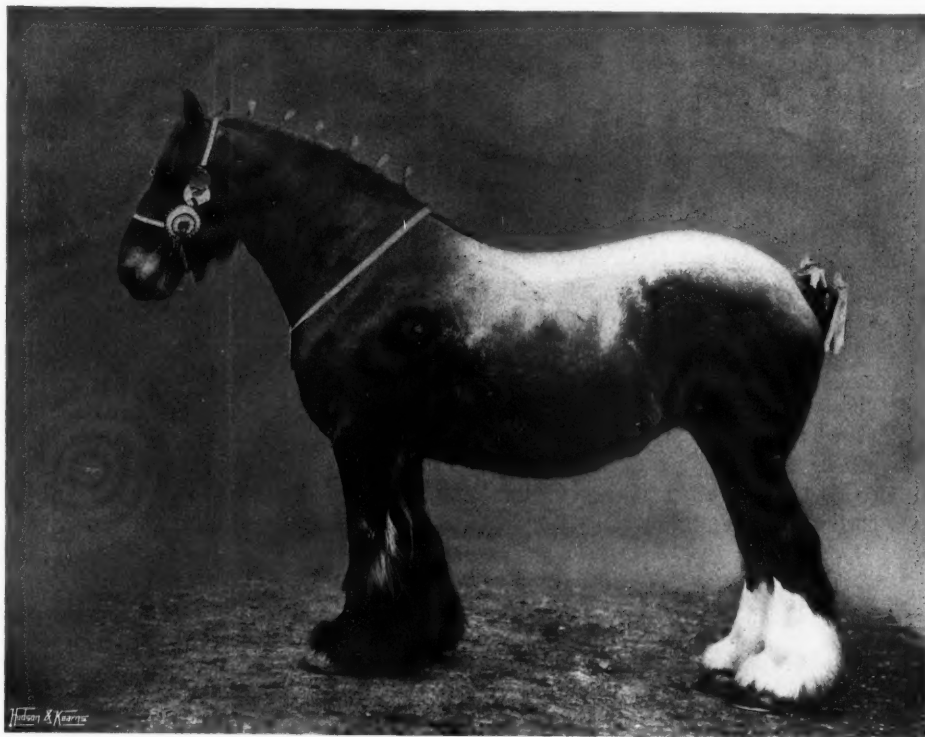
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a sure and safe foundation is due, in the first place, to the business-like manner in which the affairs of its society have been managed in the past; and this, supported by the large and increasing body of tenant farmers throughout the country who are interested in the Shire horse breeding industry, has placed the premier breed in a sound and unassailable position,

to enable them to realise their aspirations it is essential that they should breed from good, sound stallions and mares. Hence the great desire of the numerous local Shire horse societies to secure the services of sound, typical, weighty stallions. In proof of this, one of these bodies (the Warwickshire Shire Horse Society) gave 660 guineas for a two year old stallion at the show last week.

The two Champions were Lord Rothschild's stallion Birdsell Menestrel, and Messrs. Forshaw's mare Stolen Duchess. These two animals are splendid, typical specimens of the breed, a credit alike to their breeders and owners, and were worthy of the distinguished honours which they won. These are the reasons, in my opinion, which have entered very largely into the present recovery of the Shire breed, and which have been instrumental in popularising the breed throughout the country, while every credit is due to the owners of large studs for the great encouragement which they constantly give to the production of the best specimens of this old English breed of horses.

WALTER CROSLAND.



F. Babbage.

STOLEN DUCHESS.

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which makes its future prospects most hopeful. Another pleasing feature is the growth of the export trade, which has doubled during the past year, and there are signs that there will be a more active demand in the immediate future, not only in the States, but in the great Republic of Argentina, and also in Australia and New Zealand. This is a trade that must be encouraged, and, to my mind, a good foreign demand is essential, and will be more so in the future than at present, on account of the increasing number of Shires bred in this country. We cannot, of course, expect the foreign buyers to give the high prices which the best specimens of the breed now command in this country; but they will take, we hope, the medium class of animal, though I am not so sure that this class of animal would suit our Argentine friends if they once make up their minds to go in for Shires. My experience of the Argentine buyer is that he will have the best cattle and sheep, and it may be that he will prefer to have the best Shire horses. Let us hope so; 'tis a consummation devoutly to be wished." It is also hoped that the splendid enterprise of His Majesty and Lord Rothschild in sending out a number of typical specimens of Shire mares and stallions to the States and Canada for exhibition at the principal shows will bear fruit in stimulating the demand for Shires in those countries. With regard to the recent Shire Horse Show, this was one of the best the society has ever held, judging by the crowded state of the Agricultural Hall, by the interest shown both by the general public, and, in particular, by the tenant farmers of the country, which is as great as, if not greater than ever. As for the merits of the exhibits, a high standard of excellence was very noteworthy throughout the classes competing for the liberal prizes offered by the Shire Horse Society, the three year old filly and the old stallion classes being perhaps the best classes in the show. The breeders' prizes, offered in conjunction with the class prizes, have added an additional interest to the show, and are a great incentive to the tenant farmer breeders especially to try to breed the best, and these prizes have taught them to appreciate the fact that

between the numerous streams which flow around the various tributaries of the river Wey surrounding Newark Abbey, and set it on along what we call, in our local phrase, the "gripes," i.e., the little ditches one "sput" deep, which drain the humid fields into the smaller water-courses. Then when our dog was hard at work, leaping in dog fashion along their line, we would run some 20yds. or 30yds. further down, and kneel within the gripe, with eyes and ears alert to catch the first faint sights and sounds of the four different kinds of mice we knew might come fleeing for their lives along its way. First would appear the golden harvest-mice, disturbed from their repasts on spiders and other crawling creatures, though with rodent teeth (I speak advisedly); then would come rushing roughly down the short-tailed land-voles, both of which usually were only caught to be released; and after this approached the time of anxious waiting for the slower-footed



TATTON DRAY KING, THE PROPERTY OF EARL EGERTON OF TATTON.

land and water shrews. On the average perhaps a hundred land-shrews would be caught in our varied and numerous attempts before we captured one of our much-desired though cross-grained friends, a water-shrew. Our method of capture was by swiftly pressing down the moving grass with our bare hands, and then with judicious manipulation allowing our captive to escape into the glassy prison of a pickle bottle. Climbing the hill on which the vicarage stood, we would release our find into a zinc-lined corn-bin, slightly tilted on its end, so that one-third was dry and two-thirds covered with water, which we frequently changed. Then we would set to work and find insects and worms to try to satisfy the voracious appetite of our much-cherished guest. However, after some experience we discovered that frogs most easily supplied this need, and with the thoughtless cruelty of youth, each day one frog, alive and fit, was sacrificed to the

rapacious maw of our dusky-coated visitor. The entertainment of the day was to observe the finding and the struggle under the water, through many minutes, between the shrew and its much heavier prey. In our investigations, we observed that the water-shrew would easily catch the slower kinds of fishes, *e.g.*, miller's thumbs, gudgeon, little roach, and also all the larger water insects, *e.g.*, *Dytiscus marginalis*, etc., but was not quick enough to secure the swifter minnow, smaller dace, or stickleback; that shrews continually utter a gentle, varied, squeaking sound as they pursue their prey on land, which pursuit is entirely guided by scent and touch, while under water the power of feeling is the only sense they use, as evidenced by their erratic course; and also we became painfully aware of our utter inability ever to safely handle them, which proved to us the truth of the almost insuperable difficulty in the way of any man, however kind, who attempts to tame the shrew.

THE CYPRESS IN ITALIAN LANDSCAPE.

IN the heart of Italy, not far from the City of Flowers, there is a little garden on a hillside, where roses, pink, yellow and white, run riot unrebuked in the sunny silence. Wistaria and honeysuckle clamber over the tumbledown marble seats; lilacs and geraniums as tall as a man almost hide from sight the dark ilexes crowded against the pink-washed wall. A tangle of azaleas, soft-hued as the lining of foam-kissed seashells, fills to overflowing the shallow basin of the old fountain,

which now plays no more as once it was wont to play in those long-ago days when the Magnificent kept court by yellow Arno. In the middle of the gay garden stands one tall cypress dreadfully alone. It is so tall that one fancies it might, at night-time, when the flowers are asleep, hold converse with the stars. There is something oppressive about its solitariness. It seems nowise to match the mood of the light-hearted wilderness of blossoms. In the dulcet melody of that Tuscan garden it strikes,

as it were, a discordant note. Even so perhaps might some Egyptian obelisk stare at heaven, forlorn in an alien land.

Giuseppe, the garden-boy, in love with light and laughter, feels keenly the doleful impress of this dark presence.

"E tristo tristo, quest' albero! Non sorride mai," he told me once.

And Maddalena, his mother, washing clothes in the streamlet which makes a mirror for the oleanders, looked up from her work to explain why the cypress never smiles. "E l'albero dei morti, Signorina," she said, timing her soft-spoken words to the rhythmic thuds of the flat wooden mallet with which she was beating the wet linen.

"It is the tree of the dead."

Almost always the cypress strikes, louder than any other note, this note of mournful aloofness. Holding rank with the stone pine in the aristocracy of trees, austere, sombre, secretive, it watches over the dwelling-places of men and over the dwelling-places of their dear dead. Cypresses like sentries, erect, alert, unsmiling, keep guard still over ruined remnants of forts which have laughed defiance at the Moor across the blue Mediterranean. Cypresses like spires, immensely tall, flank the doorways of little pilgrimage chapels high up in the heart of the hills. They point to heaven; but there is no joy in their aspiring. A cypress grove is surely among the mournfullest things in Nature. Seen from afar, it is as a black patch upon a brocade of green and gold. It may lie in the midst of a sunlit radiant plain, but the sunshine will only enter it by stealth. By moonlight it becomes unbearable, ominous, ghost-haunted. The wind will creep among the close-packed branches, making a little noise no louder than a sigh. It is like the moan of some sorely wounded creature, or



SENTINELS.



"FROM BENEATH TOWER UP THE SLATELY CYPRESSES."

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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the echo of a dirge. The winds never laugh, never sing, in the tops of the cypresses. But one fancies they may rejoice to feel the giant caresses of the tempest. If mournfulness be the first note they strike, these solemn trees, the second is dignity. Sorrow is but rarely mean or shabby. They have a serene stateliness of form which never fails to dignify mere prettiness, which adds distinction even to triumphant beauty. One's dazzled eyes follow thankfully the restful dark boundary lines of cypresses, winding downhill between terraced orchards of grey olives, or soaring skyward out of the delicate green beech scrub which crowns so many of the lower hills in Northern Italy. The beeches are cut to make charcoal, so that they never have a chance to grow tall, and the cypresses tower above them most royally. Once, on a spring morning in a corner of Piedmont, I climbed a little hill for the sake of the pageantry blooming beneath the beeches—all the ground was white with lilies of the valley—and at the topmost step of the steep mule-track I came suddenly face to face with El Dorado. Within a stone's throw, as it seemed, there was a gently sloping hillside entirely clothed with wild laburnum. The midday sun shone full upon it, and the shock of that surprising splendour was almost a physical pain. But the aching brightness was softened, made bearable, beautified beyond imagination, by a delicate curve of intensest green which swept through it from top to bottom: the line of a cypress boundary, dividing in twain this incredible glory of gold.

Another Pisgah-peep into the very heart of Beauty I remember, framed by the rose-coloured archway of a long-dead emperor's pleasure-house: between two slender cypresses, twin pinnacles of black against a sky of lapis lazuli, a peach tree in full bloom queened it over a court of violets and starry daisies. And once at dusk of a December day I saw a straight slim cypress cleaving darkly the midmost heaven; it was like a sword-blade piercing the heart of the blood-red sunset—even so, I have thought, remembering this in sunless lands, might the sword Nothung, which All-Father gave to yellow-haired Sigurd, cleave the flames of the burning of Valhall in the twilight of the gods. But it is, after all, chiefly as guardians of the dead that the cypresses keep their place in Memory's treasure-house of Italian pictures. There is scarcely a campo santo without its sombre sentinels. One gracious garden of the dead I know well; it is shadowed by the wall which girdles the deathless city of the Cæsars, and it is so fair a place that Grief herself is tearless there. Here, beneath the cypresses, in the cool of the day, walks a grave-eyed gentle woman, whose hands are filled with long-stemmed lilies. Singing she goes her way, and as she passes by the violets on graves innumerable lift their bowed heads to kiss the hem of her star-bright robe. The words of her song are strange, but the listening cypresses know its secret. They give her greeting even as the little poor brother of Assisi gave her greeting long ago: "Welcome, sister Death!"

ANGELA GORDON.

THE CULTIVATION OF MUSSELS IN BRITTANY



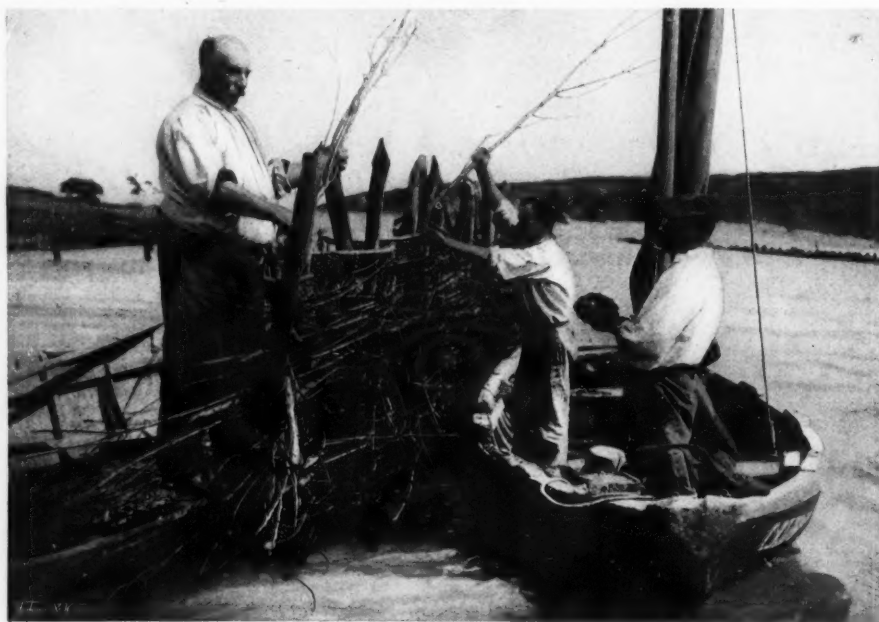
COLLECTING NAISSAIN

THERE is only one other bivalvular shellfish which the Parisian gourmet prefers to the mussel, and that is the more delicately flavoured oyster. Indeed, I have heard some

lovers of good eating declare, in all sincerity, that there is nothing to choose between the two, provided that they have been equally carefully cultivated and equally skilfully prepared for the table. But that is a controversial matter which may well be left for discussion among those epicures who delight in post-prandial subtleties. Of one thing I am certain: mussels à la béchamel, or à la poulette, or even à la marinière, are bad to eat when prepared with well-grown fish by an experienced chef. And no self-respecting

cook would think of using any but the finest cultivated mussels. The poor specimens—nearly all shell—which are gathered on the rocks along the coasts of England and

France he would reject with scorn. He must have either Belgium or Brittany mussels, each of which have their good points, the former being noted for their large size, while the latter are preferred for their exquisite flavour. During an autumn sojourn in Brittany last year I had the opportunity of spending several days in the midst of the mussel cultivators of Tréguier, off the Morbihan coast, and I learnt a good deal about their calling which will interest not only the general reader, but the practical man of business. These mytilculteurs, or



CONSTRUCTING A BOUCHOT.



MILLIONS OF MUSSELS.

bouchoteurs as they are called in that part of France, are stationed at the mouth of the river Vilaine. The mouths of rivers

are invariably chosen as the site of their operations, and the muddier they are the finer the mussels are said to be; for this shellfish thrives best where the water is continually being stirred up. Moreover, it likes a certain proportion of fresh water mixed with that of the sea. The conditions under which it grows most advantageously are thus the very opposite of those which prevail in the case of oysters. In fact, the two shellfish appear to be antipathetic to each other, and you will never find them cultivated side by side.

An old bouchoteur, who has been thirty years in the business, gave me my first lesson in mussel cultivation. Clad in the oldest, strongest pair of trousers I could find, and wearing on my feet a pair of borrowed *sabots*, I spent the best part of a day on the rocks of Tréhiguier collecting naissain. We formed a party of six, each provided with a little wicker basket, which we were instructed to fill as quickly and as many times as possible with the small, almost microscopic mussels which were scattered by millions around us. The work seems simple enough, but there is a knack all the same in collecting naissain. The continual bending, too, is fatiguing in the extreme, and the damage done to finger-nails is lamentable. The result of our day's labour was a quantity of small mussels sufficient to fill the bottom of a fairly large fishing-boat. Early next morning we proceeded to tackle the second part of our task, that of placing the naissain in bags made out of old nets. My ancient friend had bought a large number of nets once used for sardine-fishing, and these we cut up into convenient sizes. Each bag must hold about three pints and a-half of naissain, and, after being fairly tightly packed, must be tied up. The reason why netting, in preference to other materials, is used will be seen later. Having filled what was considered to be a sufficient number of bags for the day's use, off we went

in our boat to plant them among the bouchots at the mouth of the river. These bouchots consist of stakes solidly fixed in the mud. They protrude about a yard and a-half, and are connected with each other by chestnut tree branches interwoven one with another. The bouchots must be so situated that they are uncovered by the sea for about half the duration of the tide. It was low tide when we arrived on the scene of our operations. Taking the bags of naissain, one by one, we carefully fixed them among the branches, every half yard. In some cases it was necessary to repair the bouchots, and for that purpose we had brought with us a number of new branches. Curious to learn what would happen to these bags of microscopic mussels, I asked bouchoteur Kermedec for information. "In four or five days, monsieur," he replied, "these mussels will have burst the bonds that bind them. They won't have grown much in that time; but every little helps, and if you reckon each one has increased in size only a millimètre, their growth collectively will be considerable. Then, you must not forget that they are assisted in their escape by the waves." "But are not a large number among the naissain lost by falling on to the mud?" I remarked. "A few perhaps are," responded

Kermedec, with a smile at my ignorance. "But the majority remain among the branches of the bouchots. Young mussels,

you know, have the power of attaching themselves by exceedingly strong threads to whatever they have decided to grow on, and there we let them remain until they have reached maturity." "And in how many months' time will you gather them?" "Oh! about eighteen months hence," replied the old bouchoteur. "We're going to collect some tomorrow at other bouchots, so if you like to come with us we'll show you how it's done." The collecting of the mussels was done, of course, at low tide. The men removed the

chestnut tree branches one by one and pulled off the fine large mussels in a manner which strikingly reminded me of vintagers



AT WORK ALONG A TAMARINIÈRE.



BRITTANY WOMEN PACKING.

gathering grapes. The particular bouchots visited on this occasion differed from the others. They were what are known as tamarinières. The name is derived from that of the tamarind tree, the branches of which are fixed perpendicularly in the mud so as to form a sort of artificial hedge. This form of bouchots is more profitable than the ordinary one; but, on the other hand, it has two disadvantages. The work of gathering the mussels is unusually hard, and the thick hedges have the effect, in time, of blocking up the mouth of the river with mud.

The work of the mytiliculteurs of Brittany is exceedingly arduous. But they have the satisfaction of knowing that it is exceedingly well paid, considering the small capital which it is necessary to have to establish a number of bouchots. Compared with the cultivation of oysters, it is infinitely more profitable. As my old friend put it: "Ten thousand francs capital placed in oyster-beds would bring me about a thousand francs a year profit, whereas a thousand francs capital put into bouchots have been known to provide an income of ten thousand francs a year."

FREDERIC LEES.



ON THE WAY TO PLANT THE NAISSAIN.

CONCERNING THE DODO.

THOUGH it is now close on 300 years since the last living dodo disappeared, the memory of the bird still lives among us. In dying, indeed, it furnished us with a standard expression, so to speak, of things and customs which have passed out of being, as witness the phrase "As extinct as the dodo." Yet for all this, apart from museums and the pages of scientific memoirs, not much is really known about this curious bird; this portly pigeon, sedate of mien and somewhat unwieldy of carriage, which became hustled out of existence through the introduction of vulgar herds of pigs into its island fastnesses.

The story of the dodo is a peculiarly interesting one: so much so that it becomes difficult to present it in a few words. To begin with, it was a gigantic flightless pigeon—being as large as a turkey—which was discovered in the Island of Mauritius about the beginning of the sixteenth century by Portuguese navigators, though it is to the Dutch voyagers who rediscovered the island at the close of the century that we owe the first detailed account of this bird. In the narrative published in 1601 of the voyage of a Dutch vessel which visited this island in 1598 the dodo is described as a bird as big as a swan or bigger, with a large head, no wings, and a tail consisting of a few curly feathers. "They called them," says Professor Newton, "walghvogels"—i.e., nauseous birds—because, as is said, no cooking made them palatable; but another and perhaps better reason, for it was admitted that their breast was tender, is also assigned, namely, that this island-paradise afforded an abundance of superior fare." In 1628 we have a description of this bird by an Englishman, Emanuel Altham, who, writing to his brother, says: "You shall receive . . . a strange fowle: which I had at the Iland Mauritius called by ye portingalls a Do Do: which for the rareness therof I hope wilbe welcome to you." Thus, he evidently proposed sending home a specimen of this quaint

fowl, and that he intended it to reach this country alive we may gather from a second reference to this bird in another letter, where he remarks "if it liue." But it does not appear that the bird ever arrived. Be this as it may, living specimens certainly reached Europe, and one at least was exhibited in London, for about 1638 Sir Hamon Le-Strange discovered it in a show, and describes it as "somewhat bigger than the largest Turkey Cock, and so legged and footed, but shorter and thicker." By way of entertaining visitors the showman apparently in-

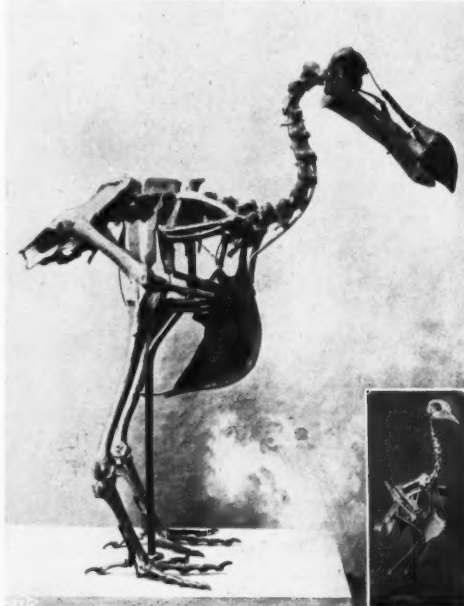
duced his captive to swallow "large pebble stones . . . as bigge as nutmegs."

It was this bird, probably, which later, as a stuffed specimen, formed part of the Ashmolean Collection at Oxford. Here it remained till, in 1755, having become moth eaten, it was ordered to be destroyed; but, in accordance with the original instructions of Ashmole, the head and right foot were cut off and preserved, and are now reckoned among the greatest treasures of the University Museum. This head and foot, with another foot in the British Museum, and a head in Copenhagen, are all that remain of dodos seen in the living state by Europeans. Fortunately, however, many sketches from life, besides more pretentious pictures from living birds by Dutch artists, were made before the doom of extinction was fully executed. All that is known of the life history of this unfortunate victim to the march of civilisation has been gathered together by Professor Newton, and makes one of the most fascinating sections of his "Dictionary of Birds." And to this many will doubtless turn to supplement the scanty history here presented.

Our object now is rather to comment on the flightlessness of this bird. Fortunately, the skeleton affords us all the evidence we need for such a discussion, at least in so far as the bodily framework is concerned; for the anatomists of the time, lacking the zeal displayed by their contemporaries the artists, do not appear to have been sufficiently enthusiastic to take the trouble to dissect a specimen. That this opportunity was presented to them we gather from the fact that a Mr. Gosling, about 1634 "bestowed the Dodar (a blacke Indian bird) upon ye Anatomie School" at Oxford. There is no record to show that any attempt was ever made to use this unique opportunity. Bones in abundance have been found in Mauritius, but else we have only a few fragments of feathers, the beak-sheath and the scales of the feet.

The dodo, as we have said, was flightless, a feature which it shared with many other birds, among them its near ally the solitary from the neighbouring Island of Rodriguez; the æpyornis, the moa and the living members of the ostrich tribe. This very unbirdlike condition, in every case, has followed as a consequence of the "piping times of peace"! Unalloyed peace and plenty is good neither for birds nor men, for it begets degeneration in both. The birds to which we have just referred

as being flightless have become so because, for countless generations, they have enjoyed an abundance of food, easily procured on the ground, a congenial climate, and freedom from enemies. Thus freed from the necessity of exertion of any kind their powers of flight rapidly declined. Being no longer obliged by Dame Nature to maintain even a minimum standard of



DODO AND COMMON PIGEON.

perfection in this exercise, birds which would have failed even to attain this had now as good a chance of survival as their neighbours who may have been better endowed, and when this came to pass flight as a means of locomotion became impossible, for the wings were no longer able to bear them up. Then, as now, this degeneration at first would be scarcely apparent in so far as the shape and size of the wing are concerned; but slowly, generation after generation, this wonderful limb grows less and less, and at the same time grows blurred, so to speak, in its contours. In the present-day members of the ostrich tribe we have well-nigh every possible gradation in this decline, the last stages being seen in the emu and the apteryx, and the final extinction of the limb in the moas, in which there was apparently no trace whatever of this organ.

In the case of the dodo, swine, introduced by the birds' arch-enemy man, put an end to the race before the degeneration of the wing had proceeded very far. Though it had become so reduced as to be useless for flight, the original proportions of the several parts were still preserved. By way of estimating the relative degeneration of the dodo's wing, the reader should compare this limb in the photograph of the skeleton of this extinct pigeon and that of a common tame pigeon. To bring out the full force of the comparison, contrast the wing with the leg in each case. In the dodo the wing, you will remark, is closely flexed, the arm and forearm lying side by side, while the hand—which by the loss of one or two small bones, the phalanges, is shorter than in life—hangs almost at a right angle from the wrist joint. Now compare this with the enormous legs! Turning now to the pigeon, we find the forearm forming an angle with the arm, while the hand has

been bent back so that forearm and hand lie parallel—these relationships, by the way, have, of course, no significance, and are due to the idiosyncrasies of the osteologist who mounted the skeletons. But it is clear that the wing in this skeleton is a relatively much larger and more powerful organ than the leg.

Correlated with the degeneration of the wing we find, in the case of the dodo, as in all other flightless birds, a reduction in the size of the great median keel which runs down the middle of the breast bone. In birds of the ostrich tribe this keel has vanished altogether; in the curious "owl-parrot" (stringops) but a ridge remains. In the dodo it is represented by a crescentic plate, whereas originally it was of the form seen in the skeleton of the common pigeon, which retains in undiminished force the wonderful powers of flight which the pigeons possess in such a high degree. The relatively great size of the dodo must be regarded as the outcome of the conditions of life which rendered flight unnecessary. Where enemies have to be evaded, or long journeys to be taken to procure food, any tendency to an undue increase in the size of a bird is kept rigorously in check; but when these checks are removed this tendency to bulk gains free play and develops accordingly.

Such in bare, brief outline is the history of the dodo. On another occasion we may as briefly trace the history of the dodo's near ally, the solitaire, of the neighbouring Island of Rodriguez. This bird is in every way as interesting as the dodo, but somehow its fame has been eclipsed thereby. The photograph of the dodo given herewith is that of a skeleton in the possession of Mr. Rowland Ward of Piccadilly, and was taken for the purpose of illustrating this article.

W. P. PYCRAFT.

BIRDS & ANIMALS IN RHYME AND LEGEND.

THERE are a large number of rhymes descriptive of birds and animals, and the superstitions attached to them, found in the United Kingdom, and it may interest people who love ancient lore to read the following examples.

The following verses are quaint and interesting:

"The nightingale and cuckoo sing both in one month.

Timely blossom, timely ripe,
April showers bring milk and meal
April fools—or gowks,
Sweet as an April meadow
Is smell of April and May
Black Cross Day."

"In April a Dove's flood
Is worth a king's good."

"On the first of Aperill
You may send a gowk whither you will."

"In the month of Averil,
The gowk comes over the hill,
In a shower of rain:
And on the first of June
He turns his tune again."

There was a superstition that a barnacle, a well known shellfish, which is found on the bottom of ships, would, when broken off, become a species of goose:

"The Scottish barnacle, if I might choose
That of a worme doth waxe a winged goose."

This superstition dates back to the fifteenth century.

The haddock has on each side beyond the gills a large black spot. Superstition assigns this mark to the impression St. Peter left with his finger and thumb when he took the tribute out of the mouth of a fish of this species:

"But superstitious haddock which appear
With marks of Rome, St. Peter's finger here."

"O superstitious dainty, Peter's fish,
How com'st thou here to make so godly dish?" (1693.)

There are many local rhymes about the robin and the wren:

"Covering with moss the dead's unclosed eye
The little red-breast teacheth charitie."

"Call for the robin red-breast and the wren,
Since o'er shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flowers do cover,
The friendless bodies of unturied men." (1632.)

These two following refer to the superstition about killing robins:

"The robin's breste of red so rare
Was dyed with bluide of our Savioure
A curse will falle on alle who slaie
The robin with its breste so gaie." (1509.)

"I found a robin's nest within our shed—
And in the barn a wren has young one bred
I never take away the nest nor try
To catch the old ones, lest a friend should die
Dick took a wren's nest from his cottage side
And ere a twelvemonth past his mother dy'd."

These are two versions of an old rhyme:

"A robin and a wren
Are God Almighty's cock and hen."
"Tomtit and Jenny Wren
Were God Almighty's cock and hen."

To meet a pig was considered a very bad omen:

"Neither did here
In sight appear
Of swine, foul dreadful nomen;
Which common fame
Will it proclaim
Of luck, dire wretched omen."

The crowing of a cock at bedtime is a sign of bad weather. Cows and donkeys, stormy petrels and kingfishers, are all weather prophets:

"If the cock crows on going to bed
He's sure to rise with a watery head."

"A learned case I now propound
Pray give an answer as profound:
'Tis why a cow about half an hour
Before there comes a hasty shower,
Does clap her tail against the hedge."

"'Tis time to cock your hay and corn
When the old donkey blows his horn."

Stormy petrels:

"From birds in sailing men instruction take
Now be in port, now sail and profit make."

"The peaceful king-fishers are met together
About the decks and prophesie calm weather."

There is a curious rhyme about the sagacity of a hedgehog. (1733)

"Observe which way the hedge-hog builds her nest
If front the north or south or east or west:
For if 'tis true the common people say,
The wind will blow in quite contrary way:
If by some secret art the hedge-hogs know
So long before which way the wind will blow
She has an art which people lack
That thinks himself fit to make almanack."

The lepus or weasel, the owl and the cuckoo, have an ill-omened reputation:

"Nor did we meet with nimble feet
One little fearful lepus
That certain sign, as some divine
Of fortune bad to keep us."

"Within my cot, where quiet gave me rest
Let the dread screech owl build her hated nest
And from my window o'er the country send
Her midnight screams to bode my latter end." (1770.)

"Are you really, the fatal cuckoo on yon spreading tree
Hath sounded out your dying knell already." (1681.)

The owl, as well as a bird of ill-omen, was considered a weather prophet:

"When the lonely owle on his chimney howle
In dead of a wintrie night:
The devil doth prowle in search of some soule,
Tney say that is taking its flight.
But better I ween, should this bird be seen
Without brooding on death or s'laughter;
As a prophet in fea hers, of wind and of weathers
Foretelling the falling of water."

The appearance of the dotterel is supposed to foretell wintry weather:

"When dotterel do first appear, it shows the frost be very near
But when that dotterel do go, then you may look for heavy snow." (1681.)

The two following are quaint rhymes about geese at Michaelmas-tide :

"Geese now in their prime season are
Which if well roasted are good fare :
Yet however, friends, take heed
How too much on them you feed
Lest when as your tongues unloose
Your discourse do smell of goose."

"At Michaelmas, by right divine
Geese are ordained to bleed at Michael's shrine."

The Scotch peasant lads render the yellow-hammer's song into "De'il, de'il, de'il, take ye soon." This probably arises from the extraordinary superstition

that the bird gets on the morning of every May Day three drops of the Devil's blood, which may be distinctly traced on its breast.

"The brock, the toad, and the yellow yeorling
Get a drap o' the de'il's bluid ilka May morning."

Since childhood I have known the curious old song that describes the deer, the hare, the man and the woman :

"The harte he loves the highe woode
The hare he loves the hill
The knyghte he loves his brighte sworde
The ladye loves her will."

THE VILLAGE CONCERT.

IT was the night of one of the greatest yearly events that took place in Rowden, that of the village concert. The schoolroom had been swept out and decorated, somewhat perfunctorily, with evergreens; a rather rickety platform was erected at one end, the churchwarden's piano, out of tune, as usual, had been borrowed for the occasion, and now streams of people on foot, in carts, on bicycles, and, in one case, in a bath chair, were converging towards the centre of attraction. The public had begun to assemble even before the doors were opened, and the "tuppen'y" seats, consisting of the low infant school benches, were already occupied by a noisy contingent of ploughboys and waggoners. It was these youths who, owing to their superior lung capacity, and what Mrs. Jones at the Green Man called "howdaciousness," chiefly originated and controlled the applause, and as their tastes leaned decidedly in the direction of the comic element, serious songs formed an extremely small portion of the programme. A pronounced atmosphere of cowsheds and stables, mingled with the sharper odour of sour grains and mangel-wurzel, radiated from these benches, growing more attenuated as it floated from the sixpenny to the shilling seats, to become, except for a few occasional stray whiffs perceptible in the air when the door was opened, finally extinct before reaching the select and aristocratic two-shilling places close in front of the platform.

Rowden, lying as it did away in the hills some distance from a railway station, had to depend for the satisfaction of its musical needs almost entirely upon local talent. This fact, however, instead of being a drawback, only contributed an added interest to the concerts, since an intimate acquaintance with the private details of each performer's career in life largely influenced the sympathies and applause of the audience; so that artistic talent alone counted for very little when not combined with personal popularity, and the man with hardly any voice at all was just as likely to score a success as the one blessed by Nature with a fine organ but no particularly attractive human qualities. The originators of these entertainments had never cause for anxiety as to their success, for the villagers, with appetites sharpened by the paucity of amusement, always attended *en masse*, inclined to enjoy everything, more especially the rare opportunity of posing as musical critics. The schoolroom was filling rapidly. Only the front row of reserved seats, which the "quality" paid for and might or might not occupy, remained empty. Halfway up the middle sat a tall handsome farmer, about fifty years of age. He was leaning forward, intently studying the written programme (compiled by the schoolmaster, and copied out by the first-class scholars in their best round-hand). For the first time in seven years his own name was absent from the list of vocalists, and the fact that he had not been invited this year to sing had distinctly wounded his pride, not in his own singing, but in the song he had invariably contributed, for up till now it had seemed impossible to imagine that anyone should ever grow tired of "The Death of Nelson." He had thought it as immortal as the name of the man it commemorated. In his long-ago boyhood he had learned it from his Uncle William, his mother's bachelor brother, who formerly kept a music shop in the town, and tuned the pianos of the country gentry. His uncle had once taken him to a concert where the great singer Braham had sung this very song, and every note and turn of expression had remained indelibly fixed in his memory ever since. As he jogged along to market on Fridays, or went up to the pasture to count the young stock, it was seldom that he did not hum some favourite cadence, reiterating it again and again in a way which, though completely satisfactory to himself, was perfectly maddening to anyone who might happen to be in his company. He glanced down the programme with some disdain. What was "The Merry Springtime," with violin obligato by the vicar's daughter, or "Paddy Rooney," to be sung by the schoolmaster's brother, compared to the gem of song which the audience chose not to hear? In his heart he could not help feeling that there were some among them who would like to hear it if they could. He was reluctant to believe otherwise. "Good ev'nin', Mr. Morrison; is ther' room for a little 'un beside ye?" said a voice in his ear, and he jumped up and gallantly adjusted the empty chair beside him for a thin little talkative woman who sat

down breathlessly. "'Ope we're goin' to 'ave the pleasure o' 'earin' your v'ice in a song?" she pursued, amiably. "I 'avvn't seen a programme." Morrison's wife, who sat on the other side of her husband, looked indignantly at the woman and said, "They've never asked him this time, Mrs. Mayers."

"Niver as't 'im?" repeated Mrs. Mayers, in a voice of acute consternation; "why, I did niver 'ear tell o' no sich thing—niver as't 'im? Why, what could th' schoolmaster be thinkin' on? Ah ham disapp'inted; why, my 'usban's come o' purpose to 'ear Mr. Morrison sing, eh! It 'ud never a happened if old Thomson 'ad bin alive, you may depend on it; this 'ere noo schoolmaster don't know 'is road about yet, seems ter me. So full o' new-fangled notions, ah've na patience with 'im; ah 'ear folks isn't over-pleased with 'im startin' these 'ere callistenic exercises as 'e calls 'em—a great waste o' time in my opinion; th' boys an' gells get exercise enuff in all goodness. Ah call it downright nonsense."

"Yes," returned Mrs. Morrison, speaking in a precise manner, "and I think it very unbecoming of him to push his daughter forward in the way he does—a girl only thirteen years of age, and she is to be stuck up there before folks to play 'Home, Sweet Home,' with variations. I've really no patience with people's folly over their children, and she doesn't play so very well either; but, of course, it's not the child's fault, poor little red-haired creature."

"Well, well, Mary," interposed Morrison, gently, "it's natural for people to like to see their children able to play, and she really does it quite fairly. I've heard those variations now every day for weeks as I've gone past the house, an' she can really do 'em pretty well now, all except one part where the music seems ter run up an' down a ladder wi' the tune left on the top step, and she has to sort o' run up an' fetch it down one note at a time; it's rayther a long bis'ness, an' she makes a good many false starts, an' when she gets in the middle can't get up ter the top, but fer a child it's not sa bad after all." At this moment, the "Reverend," as the vicar was called in the village, having arrived, the proceedings were begun, and the two daughters of the agent started their pianoforte duet. Except for one of them forgetting a half-bar's pause, the consequences of this lapse of memory pursuing them relentlessly through the rest of the page, colouring the music with a quite Wagnerian agitation and unhappy sense of general dislocation, all went well, the indulgent audience applauding rapturously for some minutes after the bashful damsels had precipitately fled from the public gaze. Carpenter Bond then appeared, and sticking his thumbs comfortably into the armholes of his waistcoat, trolled forth his well-known song "Shellin' Green Peas," a ditty which seemed year by year to gain on the affections of the audience. They invariably joined in the familiar chorus, producing such a volume of sound as made the windows rattle, and the vicar sigh in vain regret after a similar effect in his church on Sundays. Bond retired from the stage with the pleasant certainty of being immediately recalled, and listened with a complacent smile to the thunderous waves of applause that gathered, rolled and broke over the audience, till the schoolmaster appeared with his embarrassed grin, saying: "Come, Mr. Bond, they won't be content without you give it 'em again."

The assembly was engaged in singing for the sixteenth time the refrain with which each of the eight verses of the song ended,

Hunder the trees—wi' ther bowl on 'er knees
Mar-y-er sat silently shellin' green peas,

when the door opened, and there entered what the shoemaker, who had certain Radical tendencies, called "the proud an' 'aughty haristocracy o' the place."

Sir John Ledyard and his wife and mother, the latter known as the "dowager," came slowly up the narrow passage between the seats, and after creating some little confusion settled down, as young Lady Ledyard had said before starting, "to be most awfully bored." Old Lady Ledyard, who was only down on a visit to her son, had insisted on coming, for in the days before her husband's death, she had taken a deep and kindly, if somewhat autocratic, interest in the doings of the tenants and labourers on the estate. Numbers of pictorial pocket-handkerchiefs, combining

instruction with utility, had been distributed by her to the school-children, and her puddings, broth and flannel petticoats had been the chief comfort of many a poor old woman's last days. Sorely had she been missed since taking her departure to London, for her daughter-in-law's charities had developed in the direction of ministering to the æsthetic and spiritual wants of the village, and the village, which had not up to the present discovered its own pressing need for monochrome engravings and books of semi-religious poetry, sighed after the material gifts which the old lady had lavished on them so unsparingly.

When everybody was at length settled down, and the obsequious schoolmaster had presented to the late comers three of the cleanest and least finger-marked among the programmes, wisely held in reserve, the proceedings were allowed to continue. A painful glee by the choirboys was followed by "Paddy Rooney." During the performance of this latter song the "dowager" was both seen and heard to be in deep and animated conversation with the vicar, who nodded his head a great deal, half rising and casting frequent glances towards the back of the room. The audience were so distracted by these tactics that they gave only a half-hearted attention to "Paddy Rooney," which consequently fell rather flat, and the schoolmaster's brother, a stranger to Rowden, felt, as he retired from the stage, that the trouble he had incurred in coming, not to mention the cost of a new tie specially bought to do honour to the occasion, had been very inadequately rewarded by the thin and indifferent stream of applause, which ceased so quickly and was not again renewed. The vicar had risen and made his way slowly down the room to the end of the bench where Mr. Morrison sat, and leaning over the intermediate people, said in a loud distinct whisper, "Morrison, Lady Ledyard—the Dowager Lady Ledyard—specially asks for your song—you know—'The Death of Nelson'—I can't think how we left it out of the programme—quite an oversight of mine—can you manage it?" "I'll go home an' get it, John," said Mrs. Morrison, with decision, for her husband seemed for a moment incapable of answering, but he afterwards murmured confusedly that he "thanked 'er ladyship; he'd be very pleased to do his best," and then whispered something to his wife about "goin' home, ter change my coat." "Of course," returned his wife, and they both bustled off in some excitement and hurried to their house, which was fortunately quite near, returning presently, Morrison in his best Sunday black coat, while his wife carried the precious song. The schoolmaster's daughter was just climbing painfully once more down the ladder with the last note of "Home, Sweet Home," as they entered, and when she had finally retired, amid a salvo of hearty clapping, the vicar stood up and announced that "by special request of the Dowager Lady Ledyard, our respected parishioner, Mr. Morrison, will now sing an old favourite, 'The Death of Nelson.'" Something electric thrilled the audience as John Morrison, feeling somewhat dazed, walked with a certain bashful manliness up towards the platform, stopping on his way to deferentially thank the handsome, haughty, white-haired old dowager, who affably shook hands and said "it would be like old times to hear the old song again." As he stumbled up the steps of the little platform everybody suddenly began to clap with an enthusiasm which, as remarked by Miss Drake, the dress-maker, who read the newspapers and adopted judicial phraseology, "was entirely without precedent in Rowden." Morrison, in the

triumph of the moment and with restored confidence in the taste of his public, never sang better in his life. There was something more pathetic and appealing than usual in his voice as he gave the lines

But those bright laurels ne'er shall fade with years,
Whose leaves are watered by a nation's tears.

Over the audience stole a subtle sense of sympathy, that thrilled all hearts into response to the song. The noisy ploughboys sat listening in a strained silence very unusual to their rough and lively natures. Mrs. Mayers confessed next day "she 'ardly knew what took 'er, but she didn't dare to breathe, the song seemed that byootiful." When it was finished there was a minute of deadly silence, and then the audience, led by the "dowager," whose white kid gloves could be seen moving with a frantic energy astonishing in such an old lady, gave vent to its



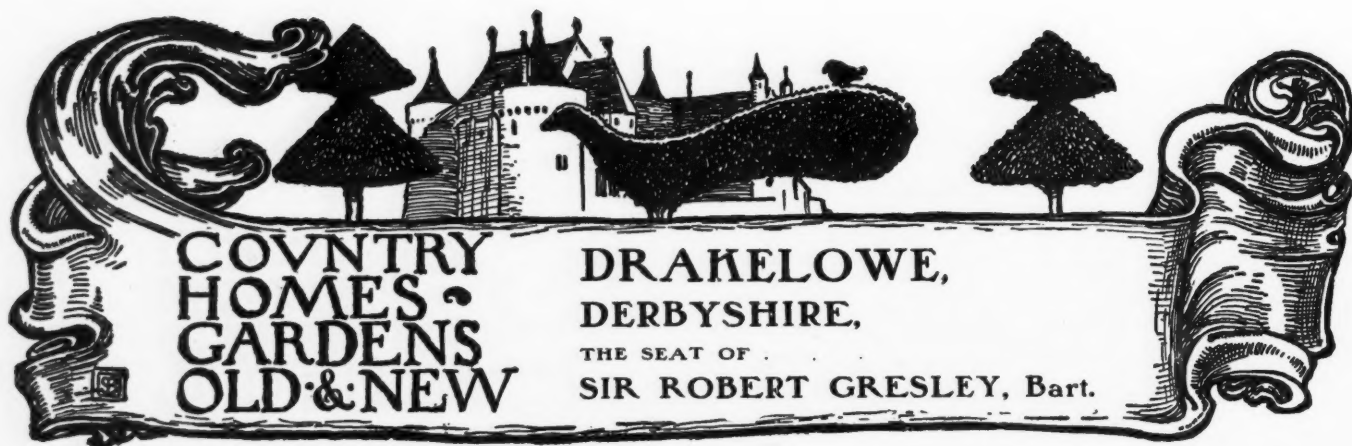
H. E. Murchison.

A VILLAGE COMMON.

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pent-up feelings in a furious storm of clapping and stamping. "Wey mun ha' it agen, John; wey mun ha' it agen!" roared old Sammy Hanson standing up in his seat, throwing decorum and good manners to the winds, obstructing the view of the indignant people sitting behind, and waving his hat like one possessed.

As Morrison and his wife proceeded upstairs to bed that night, John remarked to his better half: "Uncle William would ha' bin pleased to ha' bin at th' concert ter night." "That he would" was the answer. (Uncle William had been dead thirty-two years.) "It was kind o' the old dowager to ask me," continued John. "Oh dear no, not at all," rejoined Mary; "it only shows she's a better judge o' good music than some folks, that's all," and John was pleased to bow to his wife's superior penetration, and let it go at that.



DRAKELOWE is in Derbyshire, near Burton and the Staffordshire border, the water of Trent skirting one side of the park. The curt sentences of Domesday record that among the wide lands of Nigel of Stafford was a manor in "Drachelawe" and "Hedcote" which Elric had, Elric who had perchance gone down at Hastings before the companions of Nigel, who in 1086 was riding as lord over the lands which Elric and Godric of Siward and Elnod and many a one more had held before the Fighting Man banner had fallen.

A suggestion based mainly upon Nigel's surname of Stafford makes him of the race of the lords of Conches, nephew of that Raoul of Tosny, who, though the bearing of Duke William's gonfalon was the hereditary right, would not lift it at Hastings lest he should be the less forward in the press of fighting knights. Raoul was of the same stock as the Duke himself, and if we allow this ancestry to the lord of Drakelowe, his descendants can claim a pedigree unmatched in Europe for antiquity, an origin mounting with Ivars and Rognwalds into the myth-history of the Norsemen. Every line of the Domesday entry of this manor where Nigel has four ploughlands in his demesne is of peculiar interest to the

antiquary. For, amazing to tell, the heir male of Nigel of Stafford has still his home upon the lands of his ancestor, Sir Robert Gresley of Drakelowe representing the twenty-eighth generation of his house. The centuries have gone by, dynasties have fled away, the grave has entombed a three dozen of our sovereigns, yet the children of Nigel still hold to Drakelowe. A Gresley was in arms against Henry III. and yet did not lose Drakelowe utterly; another rode against Charles I., and the Drakelowe family was undisturbed by the Restoration. In the long line of Gresleys there must have been plotters and gamblers, men of wasteful fancies and lovers of change—a long pedigree never fails to record such—but Drakelowe remains unforfeited, unsold and unbartered. The spirit of the bear in her cave, of the mole in his chamber, must have been ever in this Gresley strain. What English family could show the like record, unless it be Shirley of Ettington, and though Shirley have a Domesday ancestor's lands he is not heir of that ancestor. Nor have the energies of the family narrowed themselves in the mere blind clutching at the estate which they held in old time by the service of rendering yearly a bow without a string, a Tutbury quiver, a dozen fledged arrows and a bozon or broad-headed bolt. Many



Copyright.

THE HALL DOOR: EXIT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



ENTRANCE HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

deeds are recorded of the lords of Drakelow. The Gresleys followed the Earl Ferrers, and Geoffrey of Gresley, living in King John's reign, was Ferrers's steward, and being made Constable of the Peak was doubtless at the Earl's winning of that castle in the year of the Great Charter. This Geoffrey is the first whose seal is found with the vary shield of the Gresleys, the arms of their feudal lord borne with a difference. His grandson, Sir Geoffrey of Gresley, was yet a lad when the wars of the barons with Henry III. brought Ferrers into the field, but he saw Evesham fight and all the troubles which followed, and as "our enemy and rebel who in the time of the war adhered to our enemy and rebel Simon de Montfort" Geoffrey of Gresley was proscribed by name, and Thomas Corbet had his manors until Geoffrey could redeem them at a high price. The rough days of civil war passed, but left a spirit of lawlessness alive in the North, and the generations which followed have a history full of those wild doings of which old-fashioned novelists would have us believe that life in the Middle Ages was compact. Homicide and outlawry are all that is known of the younger sons of Geoffrey, and Sir Piers of Gresley, the heir, made himself known far and wide for a ruthless neighbour. Sir Piers's dame was his true helpmate, and in her widowhood we have her hyking on her two sons to the wanton murder of Walter Montgomery, whom they slew with a Cologne sword on the heath of the Wheatlands. Four of Dame Joan's cubs have murders and other felonies to their credit, one of them falling at last in civil affray.

The next century found better work for the Gresleys' swords than cutting their neighbours' throats, and in 1415 Sir Thomas Gresley and his son Sir John brought five men-at-arms and fifteen archers over sea to France, and doubtless led them on the day of Agincourt. Sir John's sister earned a pension of £40 a year by being the first nurse of the little King Henry VI., her care of him being shared when the child was two years of age by Dame Alice Botiler, the governess solemnly entrusted by the Lords of the Council with power to smack infant majesty, "ainsi come le cas requerera." In spite of this foster-kinship with the house of Lancaster, the Gresleys turned Yorkist in the person of the nurse's nephew Sir John, who served Edward IV., and saw the crowning of Richard III. Gresley of Drakelow is a baronet of James I.'s creation, a baronet of that batch of fifty-seven patents issued in June, 1611, following the first eighteen of May. In the same year he was one of those who stood up for the new order in

the dispute for their precedence, even as his twentieth century descendant is one of the committee which is even now asserting the rights of the baronetage. Sir George Gresley of Drakelow was much about the Court in his earlier years, bearing a bannerol at the burial of Prince Henry; but although county and kinsfolk were Royalist, Sir George, a man in his sixties, armed himself for the Parliament, "the only gentleman of quality," says a contemporary account of affairs in Derbyshire, "that cordially appeared to be on our side." He served with Sir John Gell's regiment, and his estates, lying within seven miles of three garrisons of the King's men, were wasted by their troopers. He died before the Restoration and his son in his lifetime. The second baronet, a grandson, died in 1699, leaving the memory of the family miser. Later baronets, born in less troubled times, add fewer tales to the family chronicle. Sir Nigel, sixth baronet, born a younger son, was bred a lieutenant in the Navy, and brought home to Drakelow a picture of Flora Macdonald, the Highland heroine having been carried under guard in his ship to London in 1746. Eccentric and quarrelsome Governor Philip Thicknesse could say of him that "he was brave without boasting, and was just such a man as Sterne describes his uncle Toby." An old neighbour who lived on until 1846 remembered him as the biggest man he had ever seen out of a show, a man who had to thrust himself sideways into the hall pew at Nether Seile. An eleventh baronet now rules at Drakelow, one of those baronets of old creation who were bidden to represent their order at the crowning of King Edward VII. The manor of Drakelow, although continuously in the hands of the family, has not always been their seat, and when surnames began they took theirs from the lordship of Gresley, which came to them early in the twelfth century. Drakelow, indeed, was waste and desert for a long space from soon after the Conquest. A treatise on miracles by a twelfth century abbot of Burton tells how two villeins fled from their lords, the Burton monks, to Drakelow, where they had the protection of Roger of Poitou, who took up their quarrel so heartily that his men attacked the soldiers of the abbey. Vengeance fell upon the two villeins who had caused the affray. Within twenty-four hours they had fallen sick and died. Horror upon horror came upon Drakelow; the dead villeins, rising night after night from their unquiet graves, were seen rushing about Drakelow fields, bearing their wooden coffins on their shoulders, and sometimes changing to the likeness of bears and wild hounds.





THE TERRACE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Banging their coffins against the house-walls, they would cry aloud to the quaking villagers to "bestir themselves and come." The meaning of the dreadful summons was seen when all Drake-lowe sickened with a mortal sickness, two hinds and Dru, the bailiff of the Poitevin, alone escaping. Roger himself, smitten with fear, went repentant to the abbot, but the ghosts were not laid until neighbours dug up the bodies of the vampire villeins and burned their hearts on Dodefreseford Hill, an evil thing in the shape of a black crow whirring out of the last of the smoke.

"Sir George Gresley," wrote Leland in 1540, "dwelleth at the manor place of Colton," but "hath upon Trent, a mile lower than Burton town, a very fair manor place and park at Draykelo." This park of Drakelowe, says the present baronet, in an interesting note attached to the valuable history of the Gresleys, compiled by Mr. Falconer Madan, a cousin of the house, is nearly 580 acres in extent, and is fairly well wooded, with many fine old beeches and oaks. "It is, however," he adds, "the pleasure grounds and gardens which are the chief beauty of the place, many of the hollies and yews lining the walks being well over 30 feet in height." The rose garden and round garden date, in his opinion, from the beginning of the eighteenth century or earlier. The house itself it is difficult exactly to date, as there have been many alterations and restorations at different periods;

and breast high, are placed a few inches from the walls and increase the power of the deception. In these are little wicket gates that, half open, invite us to ascend the seeming forest banks." The curious fancy which so moved Miss Seward still remains at Drakelowe, where the painting is attributed to Paul Sandby. Miss Seward saw it in July, but a December fire in the spar grotto shining upon silver and mahogany must be needed to bring out all the quaint incongruity of the trick. Other rooms have some notable furniture, with five beds of carven oak of Elizabethan and Jacobean work, and two more in ebony of Portuguese fashion. The family portraits are many, a gallery of ancestors from the sixteenth century onwards; and with other heirlooms is the rare jewel which is said to have been a royal gift to that daughter of the Lord Dudley who was the wife of the first baronet's great-grandfather.

IN THE GARDEN.

AN INTERESTING WAY OF PROPAGATING THE AUCUBA.

IN the whole range of plant propagation we do not remember a more interesting instance than that of increasing the well-known Aucuba without the help of soil. The cuttings are taken in the usual way; that is, moderately-well-ripened shoots are chosen, they are cut off just



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TAPESTRY ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

but there is still some characteristic work of the time of the Stuarts, and as the house is on the site of all earlier buildings, and, as far as is known, has never been pulled down or rebuilt, it is probable that much very early work is incorporated in the present building. A date of 1723 is on a lead pipe head, and Sir Roger (1799-1837) replaced a portion of the house and added the billiard-room and bedroom over it. The depraved taste of the late eighteenth century turned the larger dining-room into a panorama of the Peak Country. "Sir Nigel," wrote Miss Anna Seward of Lichfield in 1794, "hath adorned one of his rooms with singular happiness. It is large, one side painted with forest scenery, whose majestic trees arch over the coved ceiling. Through them we see glades, tufted banks and ascending walks in perspective. The opposite side of the room exhibits a Peak valley, the front shows a prospect of more distant country, vieing with the beauties of the real one, admitted opposite through a crystal wall of window. Its chimney-piece, formed of spars and ores and shells, represents a grotto. Real pales, painted green

beneath a joint, and the lower leaves are removed. They are then stuck through—if we may use such an expression—an enlarged hole in an ordinary pot, the interior having been partly filled with moss kept constantly damp. The base of the cutting comes into contact with the moss, and the warmth of the propagating frame in which the pot is placed promotes most vigorous root action; so much so that within three weeks there are roots in abundance. Therefore, from the time of the cutting until it is actually potted, not a vestige of soil is used, and the results are perfectly satisfactory.

HARDY PERENNIALS FOR MASSING AND DIVIDING THE ROOTS.

The planting-time for the hardy perennial, and by this we mean plants which flower year by year until the growths become too matted to throw strong blooms, has arrived. Nature is bursting into new life, and an examination of the border will reveal tender shoots peering through the soil. When this happens, and the plants appear exhausted, divide them to give increased vigour to the parent and to increase the stock. Perennial Sunflowers, Michaelmas Daisies, herbaceous Phloxes, Erigerons, the Japan Windflower and all the more vigorous perennials quickly require division in strong soils. Writing of dividing the roots recalls the beauty of perennial flowers when



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THE ROSE GARDEN: DRAKELOWE

"COUNTRY LIFE."

planted in free groups. A mass of Michaelmas Daisies or perennial Sunflowers gives a picture of colour which would satisfy the true artist. It is masses of colour that we desire in the garden, laid thickly upon the brown earth, and whether it is a bed that has to be planted or a border, the same beautiful principle applies. When in the Royal Gardens at Kew last summer, one of the most delightful features of the outside garden was the massing of hardy flowers, such as the soft mauve-coloured Erigeron, or purple Loosestrife by the lakeside. We have made a selection of a few plants for this purpose, and take them in alphabetical order; the first that commends itself to our notice is the

Anemone japonica or Japanese Windflower, of which there are several varieties, but the white form called alba or Honorable Joubert will serve our

planted among dwarf shrubs, the average height of the Asters being about 4ft. Where the Asters are already established it may be necessary to divide the roots, this, from the experience of the writer, requiring attention once in every four or five years. Aster acris, soft lilac blue, and A. Amellus bessarabicus, intense purple, are two sorts more adapted for grouping in front of a shrub group or Firs. One of the most beautiful garden pictures we remember was a grouping of these two Asters before a plantation of Scots Firs; the warm colouring of the flowers carried the eye to the tall dark trees beyond. One could see this carpet of blue from the distant hill.

Plume Poppy (*Bocconia cordata*).—A group of this in front of the shrubbery or in the woodland where the sun can shine upon it is fair to see. The brownish flowers are not remarkable, but the grevish colour of the



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DRAKELOWE HALL: THE PAINTED DINING-ROOM

"COUNTRY LIFE."

purpose. This blooms, as the readers of these notes are probably aware, in late summer, and continues far into the autumn. A bed of this is as if a snow-heap had settled on the ground, the pure white flowers appearing in wonderful profusion. From a distance the effect is as described. It is advisable to plant strong leafy tufts, otherwise two, or even three, years will elapse before the plants develop to any size. We have frequently noticed the liking the earwig has for the dark green leaves, almost as much so as for the *Danlia*. It is well to watch the *Anemone* bed closely, and if the presence of the earwig is detected put down bait in the form of Bean stalks, into which the marauders creep at night. Early in the morning examine the traps and destroy the enemy.

The Aconite.—We are thinking not of the winter Aconite (*Eranthis*), now peeping up through the brown earth, but the poisonous Aconitum *Napellus* and A. *autumnale*, both having flowers of blue colouring thickly set on the tall, strong spikes. We planted large groups of the former in a shady place where shrubs abounded, the Aconite not heeding the shade, and the effect was in every way satisfactory, the colour of the flowers being intensified by the dark foliage behind and around. Where the soil is rich the plants will grow to a height of 5ft., but in the case of Aconitum *Napellus* care must be taken not to leave the roots about, as they are poisonous.

Michaelmas Daisies or Starworts (Asters).—For making clouds of colour, shades of blue and white, few plants excel the Aster from September until the threshold of Christmas, when A. *Novæ Angliæ* blooms dimly in the cold winds and rains. Asters are essentially plants to group, to fling among shrubs and by the margin of shrubberies, to which they add a note of colour in the autumn months. Usually they are only seen in the border, where they are bunched up as so many sheafs of corn, and their natural grace and beauty destroyed. The most satisfactory for planting among shrubs are: *Cordifolius elegans*, *Shorti*, *punicus pulcherrima*, *Turbinellus*, *Tradescanti*, *Arcturus*, *Apollo*, *Robert Parker*, *Mai*, *formosissimus* and *Daphne*. They must be

foliage is in direct contrast to the green leaf of tree or shrub, and the bold panicles of bloom have beauty of their own. When the plant is not thrust into the shrubbery, but allowed to develop its true character away from other things, it will attain a height of 8ft. As the popular name suggests, it belongs to the Poppy family.

Calistephus sinensis (the original China Aster).—This is becoming well known in gardens, and is more stately than any of the forms which have been derived from it. The stems are about 18in. high, and the flowers a warm purple; they are single, and make a rich display of colour during the summer and autumn months. The seed should be sown in March under glass or on a hot-bed, and the seedlings planted out in late April. It is only when massed that the full beauty of this single flower is realised.

Erigeron speciosus superbus.—Among hardy perennials there are few more satisfactory kinds than this, the plants flowering from early summer until the frosts, and so abundantly that few of the leaves are visible behind this mass of purple-lilac. It has been used in the Royal Gardens for many years, and its long continuance in bloom makes it one of the most useful of plants for growing in this free way. The full flower tide is reached in July, but, as mentioned, there are blooms to be seen far into the autumn.

The Flame-flower (*Kniphofia* or *Tritoma*).—There are many Flame-flowers, and one of the finest for grouping is the variety of the most frequently met with K. *aloides* or *Uvaria* called *grandis*. It has noble stems, 6ft. to 8ft. in height, and the colour of the flowers thickly set upon them is a rich orange yellow with a dash of vermillion in it. The parent of this magnificent plant is also brilliant in colouring, and may be grouped by lakeside with the happiest results. Looking from a distance down the lake in the Arboretum at Kew, we wondered what the plant could be that gave, as it were, tongues of flame. We were too far from it to be quite certain; but closer acquaintance revealed the Flame-flower, or "Red-hot Poker" of the older gardening books. The *Kniphofia* requires a deep, rich soil, with the

crowns of the plant just beneath the surface. During the winter cover them with coal ashes or dry leaves. This is necessary during such a season as we have had recently, but when the weather is mild such a precaution is needless.

The Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*).—The list is intended to be brief, and will conclude with the Cardinal Flower, of which there are several beautiful forms. The favourites of the writer are Queen Victoria and Firefly. The former has dark-coloured leaves and tall, handsome spikes of crimson flowers, which make a happy colour association, the one intensifying the

other. Firefly is brighter, and glows with colour in the late summer days, when it attains full beauty. We once saw a bed of, we think, the variety Queen Victoria in the public gardens facing the sea at Great Yarmouth, and have never seen the effect excelled. A hundred strong tufts composed this group, which showed not the slightest trace of the disease, apparently a kind of fungus, which upset the plants in the garden of the writer. Would some reader kindly say why, on a well-drained soil and open position, this should occur?

THE WISDOM STUD.

FOR many a long year to come we hope that the continued prosperity of the Wisdom Stud may serve to perpetuate the memory of the famous stallion whose name it bears. It was, indeed, a fortunate day for Mr. Hoole when he purchased the son of Blinkhoolie and Aline for somewhere about fifty guineas. With no reputation as a race-horse, and with a very modest commencement to his stud career, he forced himself into prominence by getting a succession of winners, which culminated with Sir Hugo, the winner of the Derby in 1892. Although Wisdom himself is dead, he has left behind him sons and daughters who will worthily maintain his fame, and of his daughters in particular it may be said that the value of Wisdom mares is an ever-increasing quantity. Such a stallion as this was difficult, almost impossible, to replace, but

demonstrate that he is perfectly capable of doing his duty as a sire. What the Wisdom Stud-bred stock of Lord Bobs may do lies yet upon the knees of the gods, for the foals which we saw last year are now but yearlings, and it will not be until another year has passed that we shall be able to get an idea of their actual racing capacity. All that can be said for the present is that his stock are very promising. That he is a horse of tremendous power and bone is clearly shown in the excellent picture which accompanies these notes, and few who remember his famous sire Bend Or will fail to notice the extraordinary resemblance to him in the head and neck of his son. The likeness is even more marked when you see the horse himself; so strong indeed is it that a friend, who was visiting the Wisdom Stud together with the writer, said, as the horse stood for a moment looking at us,



W. A. Rouch

LORD BOBS.

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the Messrs. Hoole, who now own and manage the Wisdom Stud, have made what looks like being a most judicious purchase in the shape of Lord Bobs, a great commanding son of Bend Or and Silver Sea, by Hermit out of Stray Shot. It is interesting to note that Shotover, the dam of Orion, by Bend Or, is an own sister to Silver Sea, and therefore Lord Bobs and Orion are to all intents and purposes own brothers. Whatever the reports may have been concerning the temper of Lord Bobs and his want of success with his mares, or from whence these rumours emanated, I do not know, but can testify from personal experience that no one would wish to see a better-tempered horse, and the twenty-three foals which stood to his credit last year serve to

"Why, there's old Bend Or himself." There are few stallions of the powerful Stockwell type in the country, and it is to be hoped that his owners will resist the attempts of the foreigners to take Lord Bobs away from the land of his birth.

With regard to the young stock in evidence when our visit to the Wisdom Stud was made, the fact that some of them were by such sires as Cyllene, Marco, Collar, Queen's Birthday, Galloping Lad, Veles and Fitzsimon shows that the Messrs. Hoole are quite alive to the value of the mares they own and to the advantage of sending them to good stallions. A really good-looking colt, and one whose future career I shall follow with some interest, was the big bay youngster by Fitzsimon out of Lady



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LOVELORN.

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LADY CANDAHAR.

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VEGLIONE.

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Candahar, the dam, by the way, of Candahar, whom Mr. Faber retained when he let Polymelus go. On turning over the pages of my note-book I find that the "three star" brand was placed against the chestnut filly by Veles out of Lovelorn, and, therefore, half-sister to that good horse Love Wisely; and, unless I am quite mistaken, before the season is ended this lengthy, powerful filly will more than pay her way. She should certainly race, for her sire Veles was quite in the first class, and won eleven races, among them being the July Stakes, the Rous Memorial, the Princess of Wales's Stakes and the Champion Stakes, and he is, moreover, a member of that good running family the No. (4). Then, too, I find that there is a "good conduct" mark placed against the strong, shapely filly by Queen's Birthday out of Railway Guide, and a late May filly by Avington out of Countess Blucher. Then there was a lengthy, somewhat overgrown colt by Cyllene out of Stream of Gold, by St. Angelo out of Goldstream, by Wisdom; he was a late foal, and had been growing fast, so that we saw him at his worst; but there are "possibilities," one might say "probabilities," that he will make a race-horse in time. On the score of breeding there was little fault to be found with the chestnut colt by Collar out of Isa, by Isinglass out of Wedding Bell, nor did his looks belie his pedigree, his forehead being especially good, and all his movements full of that liberty which is essential to a race-horse. Covert Fund, a half-sister to Foundling, had a nice lengthy, racing-like colt by Marco to show us, and Galloping Lad had a well-balanced, strong-backed colt out of that well-bred mare Tati, whose pedigree, by the way, has quite a good old-fashioned Irish ring about it, for she is by Spahi, her dam Philandra, by Philammon.

After all is said and done, the brood mares are the backbone of a stud, and those who are in residence at the Wisdom Stud are well worth looking at. Here are some of them close at hand. Lovelorn is a beautifully-bred mare of the No. 11 family, by Philammon (4) out of Gone, and as she walks towards us it is easy to see where her filly by Veles got her fine forehead and well-placed shoulders from. Following upon her comes Lady Candahar 8, a good bay mare by Wisdom out of Candahar, by Honiton. Beginning her career at the stud in 1896, she has never missed foaling, so that she may be looked upon as being quite a type of a good brood mare. She gets them to go, moreover, and one of these days, no doubt, someone will have cause to be thankful for having bought a son or daughter of hers. A remarkably nice young mare is Miss Bobs 8, by Florizell II. out of Lady Candahar; quite a good stamp of a well-coupled, short-legged mare, she shows plenty of quality, and should make her name as a brood mare. The No. 19 family, which has done so well in France, is represented by Stream of Gold, a bay mare by St. Angelo, her dam Goldstream, by Wisdom out of Quickstream, by Trumpeter. The brown mare so busily engaged in feeding is Vegliione 3, by St. Simon out of Late Nights, and she has a very useful-looking filly indeed by Lord Bobs. A nice mare, too, is the chestnut-coloured Silent Watch (5); she is by Hawkeye out of Silent, by Wisdom out of Kissing Crust, by Brown Bread. She should be quite at home in her present surroundings, for she was bred at the Wisdom Stud in 1894.

That the land belonging to the Wisdom Stud is well adapted for the breeding of thorough-bred stock needs no saying; the past records of the place tell their own tale in that respect. It has, moreover, always been kept in first-rate condition both as to freedom from "horse taint" and as to being maintained in "good heart," for the Messrs. Hoole are not only first-rate judges of all sorts of stock, bloodstock perhaps in particular, but they are thoroughly practical farmers as well. In such an industry as the maintenance of a stud farm it is essential that there should be a strict supervision of every detail. At this stud nothing is left to chance—everything is under the master's eye. All the stock are in good healthy condition; nothing but the best of forage is used, and there is no stint. Occasionally owners of valuable

brood mares hesitate to send them away, unless to places where they are certain to be well looked after; but no one need fear to send the best mare in his possession to the Wisdom Stud. For not only are they sure to receive every care and attention, but there is ample space at their disposal, and the pasturage is exceptionally good. While on the subject of brood mares, the purchase of Enigma by the late Mr. Hoole for, I think, about 18 guineas, may serve as an instance of what may result from a combination of luck and good judgment. This mare became the dam of Florence, winner of the Cambridgeshire and about 6,467 sovs. in stakes, and of Tact, the dam of Amiable, winner of the One Thousand Guineas, the Oaks and stakes to the amount of 10,000 sovs. She was also the dam of Gravity, who produced William III., the winner of the Ascot and Doncaster Gold Cups, the Alexandra Plate, Newmarket Stakes and a total of over 13,000 sovs. in stakes. Florence, Tact and Gravity were all by Wisdom, and there are plenty of other examples of the value of the produce of Wisdom mares.

T. H. B.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE

FASCINATION.

HERE is a scene which seems almost incredible, but which actually happened in Scotland no great while since. A fox was seen by two people coming down a pass in the hills. The fox was followed by a rabbit, which came along at a smart pace and seemed impelled by an overpowering curiosity. Fox and rabbit presently disappeared into a patch of covert, and almost immediately the fox was seen to emerge with the unfortunate rabbit dead in its jaws. The whole tableau, which occurred very rapidly, is described to me as a strangely curious and fascinating one. It was witnessed by persons of unimpeachable veracity, one of them a very careful observer of wild life. In this case it was perfectly evident to the spectators that the fox had in some way fascinated the rabbit, and was consciously following out a plan devised for its destruction. As for the rabbit, it was clearly incapable of avoiding its doom. That foxes will often fascinate young and inexperienced rabbits by rolling on the ground and playing other antics is well known to keepers and others who have a large experience of both animals.

THE FOX AS A DECOY.

Some thirty years ago a tame fox was kept at the Berkeley Castle duck decoy in Gloucestershire. This animal understood the whole art of decoying wildfowl, and, showing himself to the duck, widgeon and teal on the decoy lake, used by waving his tail and moving gently to and fro to attract the attention of the curious fowl. The birds were simply fascinated by the fox's motions, and, following him up the decoy pipe, fell easy victims to the concealed fowler. It is a well-known fact that the old decoy fowlers invariably secured, if they were able, a red dog, as near in colour to a fox as possible, for the difficult part of decoying duck from the pool to the netted pipe.

OTHER FASCINATORS.

This subject of fascination is a wide one, and although some of the statements found in old books of travel and natural history have, no doubt, been gross exaggerations, there remains a large substratum of truth which cannot be got rid of. A homely example is the fascination of terror which the stoat's pursuit of the rabbit has for the conscious victim. There are few people well versed in country life who have not been witnesses of this tragedy; when the miserable rabbit, although it could, if it had the moral courage, easily make good its escape from its blood-thirsty pursuer, yet allows its terror to overcome it, and, screaming with the anticipation of its fate, yields itself a victim. Field-mice are overcome by the stoat and weasel in the same way, and have been picked up squeaking with fright, and petrified with the anticipation of death before their cruel foe could reach them. Some children of my acquaintance had for a long time a mouse rescued at such a moment from a weasel.

BIRDS AND SNAKES.

That snakes exercise an overpowering fascination on birds is, I think, indubitable. I have seen a puff-adder in South Africa surrounded by a crowd of flustered and shrieking finches, all of them so mad with fear, hate and excitement that they seemed utterly unable to tear themselves away from the dangerous vicinity. On these occasions the birds, twittering vociferously, dash in their flight quite close to the serpent which has attracted their attention. These scenes seldom, I believe, terminate without the death of one of the scolding birds, which, venturing once too often and too near the snake, is struck and falls a victim. The beautiful green tree-snake, found commonly in the acacia forests of Bechuanaland, a reptile which procures most of its sustenance from among small birds and their eggs, is peculiarly hateful to its feathered victims. I have seen one of these lithe and agile serpents



W. A. Rouch.

STREAM OF GOLD.

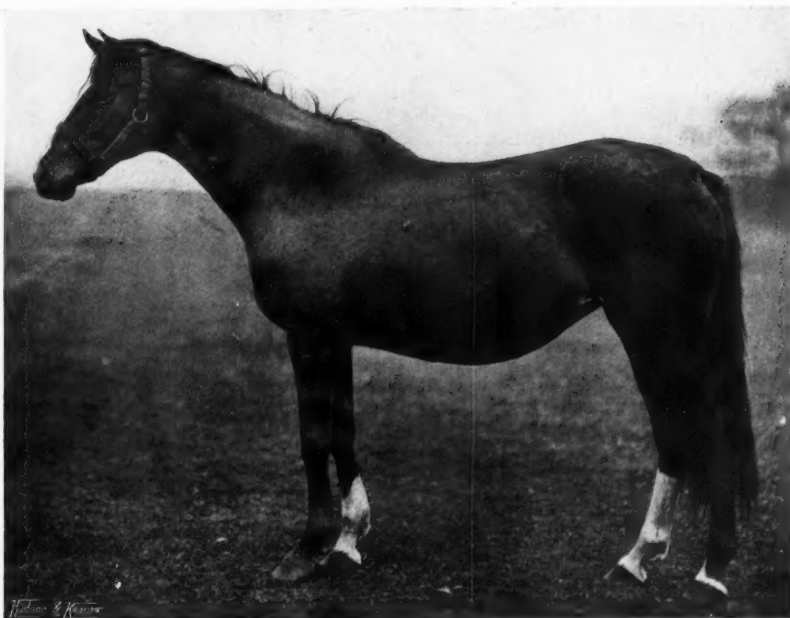
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SILENT WATCH.

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standing up in a patch of low bush, its marvellously vivid colouring lit up by the clear sunshine, surrounded in like manner by a mob of clamouring birds. A blow from a long stick was sufficient to break the back of the snake and end a scene of such dangerous fascination.

THE TREE-SNAKE'S METHODS.

I am convinced that when a snake is in need of a meal it will exhibit itself purposely with the object of attracting attention. It is perfectly well aware of the fascination its presence excites among small birds, and takes its measures accordingly. The African green tree-snake, for example (*Bucephalus viridis*), when surrounded by a mob of birds from which it means to extract a victim, may usually be seen with its bright green head and the upper part of its body raised about 1 ft. from a branch, with open mouth and neck inflated, as if for the very purpose of augmenting the natural terror of its attraction. Livingstone and the great Cape naturalist, Sir Andrew Smith, two of the most careful of all observers, had no doubt of the fatal fascination exercised by snakes upon small birds.

THE CROCODILE AS FASCINATOR.

The tribes-people along some of the larger South African rivers averred formerly, in the good days when game was plentiful, that even crocodiles had

the art of fascinating certain of the water-loving antelopes by various odd movements, grimaces and contortions, and that in this way they secured victims as the animals came to drink. That crocodiles take an immense toll from thirsty wild creatures along the river systems haunted by these saurians is perfectly well known; whether fascination has a part in these riparian murders is, one must acknowledge, not clearly proven. The natives of the Botletli River, Ngamiland, have yet another strange story of the crocodile. These reptiles, in the days when elephants abounded in this region and drank in the river, often annoyed the mighty pachyderm. The elephants in revenge would, the natives aver, occasionally take a crocodile out of the river, and, lodging it in a tree, leave it there to perish miserably. I have only one small piece of evidence in support of this strange legend. A famous African hunter, the late Mr. W. C. Baldwin, while travelling along this very river, did actually see with his own eyes the mummified skeleton of a crocodile perched in the limbs of a low tree. And to him, in explanation of so strange a sight, the Botletli people repeated this story. The elephant is, of course, far too wise and too courageous a beast to be fascinated by the crocodile, though it may be occasionally annoyed and even mauled by it at the river-side. H. A. B.

SHOOTING.

WOODCOCK.

FOR a good many years previous to the last two or three, when woodcock have seemed rather more numerous than usual in the country generally while shooting has been going on, there has been a tendency to lament that the "good old days" when many woodcock were found in the coverts have vanished; that there are hardly any left, or, at all events, that they are not found as they used to be in course of covert-shooting. This has seemed the more singular, because it is quite recognised and admitted that woodcock breed in this country much more freely than they used to. At the same time, it is also recognised that the home-bred birds, as a rule, go South after their breeding, and that the birds which we find in the covert-shooting season are immigrants from more Northern or more Eastern homes. There is no reason, therefore, that the greater number of English breeding birds should mean a greater number shot by English guns.

The theories generally advanced to account for the alleged comparative absence of the cock have been an explicable change in their habits, if that can be called a theory, or, alternatively, that, in consequence of the changed way of shooting coverts—i.e., beating them through once or twice in a season, instead of pottering about in them three days out of four all through the shooting season—we are therefore not by way of seeing the birds that are there as our fathers had the opportunity of seeing them. There may be something in this—woodcock do pass to and fro, from place to place, within a comparatively small area in the manner which this theory implicitly requires—but perhaps there is another cause, not sufficiently suspected, which has been far more effective in inducing that change which we apparently have to lament in their habits. It is commonly said that woodcock hate pheasants, and that when you introduce pheasants into a covert you drive woodcock out of it. That is perfectly true in a sense; it has been proved again and again. The most striking instance in point seems to be Lord Hastings's celebrated woodcock wood, Swanton, in Norfolk. It had been a very famous woodcock covert in that country for years and years—of course, not comparing in point of the bag with such coverts as those of Lord Ardilaun in the West of Ireland, but still remarkable for England. Then it was suggested that a few pheasants in the wood, 500 or 600 or so, only, would make a nice change, when the guns came to shoot it, from the *toujours bécasses*. What was the result? That the woodcock, or a great proportion of them, left; and a record woodcock covert was ruined, for a while, at all events, to make a very indifferent pheasant-shoot. Now, as we are informed, they do not bother about the pheasants any more in that covert, and the numbers of the woodcock have come up again very largely. But what does it all mean? Is it that the woodcock went away because they were worried by the pheasants? In a measure that may be so; but we are inclined to think that they were worried by worse than pheasants; that is to say, by the people coming to feed the pheasants. This is the point and contention of the whole of this present article, that it ought to be realised—that it is not sufficiently realised—how strong the woodcock's desire is for quiet. One of the lessons of experience which man seems to find it most difficult to learn is that by taking thought as to their habits, tastes and wants, and by providing for these he can increase the welfare, which is as much as to say the numbers, of the semi-wild birds which are the quarry for his gun. Pheasants, partridges, grouse, wild duck—with all the story is the same, namely, that by intelligent care of them in their natural habitat man can increase his sport with them. It is just the same with woodcock. The two principal ways in which man can cater for the tastes of woodcock are to give them quiet and to give them the covert that they like. They cannot get quiet if a man is coming into their coverts in order to

feed the pheasants in the evening, which is their particular hour for flight and movement, the very hour when they require quiet most. It is found in Ireland that directly a covert is enclosed the woodcock resort to it much more than before, because the people are not so often passing through it, either alone or with their cattle. On Lord Ardilaun's place, where they understand the woodcock thoroughly, the chief covert is left entirely alone, except at the time of the shoot. More than this, by way of emphasising the value which they place on quiet as a means of attracting the cock, for some days before the shoot they have men going hither and thither, with a dog or two, about twilight, on the hills round the covert, so that the woodcock, finding themselves thus disturbed on the open ground, naturally get away into the quiet covert. As to this covert itself, it is looked after carefully; it is recognised that one of the great attractions for woodcock is that the growth shall be of the right height, say 6 ft. or 8 ft. So, when a tree is beginning to grow too big, it is taken down and replaced by a smaller. The kind of tree which a woodcock likes as well as any is one of the conifers when they are young and low—Scotch fir, spruce, larch and so on. The birds are also very fond of gorse, and they do not much like big-leaved covert, as rhododendron or laurel. The reason of the preference is not hard to understand; the big leaves must act as little saucers, and in wet weather must collect the water which a puff of wind will cause them to upset in a small cataract. The gorse and conifers, with spines and needles for their foliage, make much less drip, and would naturally be much more comfortable for the birds to shelter under. These are only a few hints as to the ways in which it is possible to render coverts more attractive to woodcock. We have not yet found out any methods of "assisting Nature" actively by artificial importation, feeding or breeding, as with pheasants, partridges, wild duck and grouse; but it is certain that something may be done in the more passive way of rendering the coverts as suitable for them as possible by keeping them quiet, making them of the right material, and trimming them to the height which the birds like.

SMALL TENANTS AND SHOOTING RIGHTS.

THERE is an increasing tendency on the part of the Irish small tenant to claim the shooting rights on his holding. It is a claim which tends, of course, to make the value of all such rights practically *nil*. Shooting rights over a holding of a very few acres are of no value, because their owner is so entirely dependent on the behaviour of the little man who holds the next few acres to his. Indeed, in many cases, the bare pretence is hardly made that the tenant has an intention of exercising these rights which he claims so strenuously—even on the large assumption that there should be anything in the shape of game to exercise them upon. In such cases the claim is only made as another means of putting the screw on the landlord. The priest is the adviser of the peasant in these as in all other matters, and his advice is tolerably sure to be given in a direction which will not strongly favour the landlord; in fact, both he and the tenant would be only too glad to see him gone. It is to be feared that this unamiable motive, rather than any sincere love of sport, is at the bottom of his urging this claim. There is, of course, a similar desire for the shooting rights among the tenant farmers in England, but their motive really does seem a sporting one, namely, to shoot over their own and each other's land. They do not, in most instances, regard the landlord as a natural enemy.

TO PREVENT RABBITS CLIMBING WIRE-NETTING.

We hear of complaints coming from Australia that the rabbits, which have been a scourge of a great part of the country for so long, are becoming too clever for the colonists. They are learning—so we are told—to climb the wire-netting fences which have been erected for miles and miles, at enormous expense, to keep them out. This is spoken of as if it were a new accomplishment on the part of the rabbit—as if he were now learning to climb wire-netting for the first time. The Australians may be assured that their rabbits have no monopoly of the faculty. The rabbits of Wales and of England will climb a wire-netting if they are really

in earnest about it and want very badly to get to the other side. There is a way of checkmating them, however—at least, they do not seem to have discovered the proper move in answer yet—and that is to run a wire, about two or three inches away from the wire netting, attached to studs or offshoots, from the top of the uprights on which the netting is set. The effect of this is that when the enterprising rabbit has scaled the fence of netting almost to the very top, his head comes in contact with the wire, he realises that circumstances are too adverse to him, and gives up his scaling efforts. Of course, such an arrangement as this must add not a little to the already very heavy cost of the netting, where it has to be put up at such enormous length; but, after all, it costs less than the presence of rabbits, in the particular conditions.

LENGTH OF LIFE OF RED DEER.

A correspondent writes to us with regard to Mr. Alan Gordon Cameron's long and interesting letter about the longevity and other attributes of the Highland red deer stag, pointing out that the idea of all the old writers was that 100 years was the normal length of life for the hart and the hind. It is at this round figure that Nicholas Cox, author of the "Gentleman's Recreation," puts it, and all seem to agree. Granting the possibility or even, if it be so claimed, the probability that this liberal estimate is no more than a just one, the actual length of life of a stag does not directly affect the question as to the age at which it is for the greatest good of the forest that he should be shot. Opinions on this point vary, as we have seen, enormously. One fact we seem to know beyond all dispute, and that is that stags in a

park begin to go back in regard to their heads and condition at an age which seems singularly early for an animal which has so many years to live. In parks twelve is a generous estimate of the number of years during which a stag will improve. What a very long time he has to pass on the down grade of life, in comparison with the up, if he is to be going down hill all the years intervening between twelve and one hundred and more. It may truly be said that a park stag certainly matures earlier and probably deteriorates earlier than a stag on the hill; but this is only a matter of a year or two at most, and, after all, the deer in the park are probably in something much more like their natural habitat, more like the habitat in which authors, like the ingenious Mr. Nicholas Cox, are considering them, than the deer on a Highland forest. We take it that if Mr. Alan Gordon Cameron's estimate of the stag's natural length of life on the hill is correct, he would not advocate leaving him to live it out to the natural end. His contention, we take it, would be only that he should be allowed to live for a good many more years than some of our correspondents have deemed it good that he should live. A point which we have not yet had made at all clear in connection with the general aspect of the question, although it seems to be readily assumed, is that a stag's offspring will necessarily be better if the father is in the very prime of condition. From what we know about the breeding of other animals, it is not at all improbable that for the best possible result in the offspring the united and also the relative respective ages of the stag and the hind should be taken into account.

[Further notes on Shooting will be found on our later pages.]

THE PHANTOM FISHERMAN.

WHEN I recall the curious story I heard told by Joe Larter during the night voyage I made in his company on board the wherry Water-rail, I always assure myself that I have never had less cause to regret missing a train than I had on the night when, after a long day's angling on the Yare, I reached Reedham station a few minutes too late to catch the last train to Lowestoft. It was an early autumn night of silvery moonlight after a day of golden sunlight. Down by the river, towards which I strolled as soon as I knew I had missed the train, the sedge-warblers were singing as cheerily as in the early morning; from the midst of a wide marsh that in the daytime had revealed itself a veritable garden of wild flowers, a solitary land-rail was calling; and once, while I paused to watch a fisherman's punt glide across the shimmering lane of moonlight on the water, I heard a grasshopper-warbler "reeling" amid the lush marsh grass. Faint lines of mist marked where the weed-choked dikes intersected the marshes; but the atmosphere elsewhere was so clear that it was possible to distinguish the outlines of the distant uplands and of windmills far away. Even the hues of some of the waterside wild flowers could be seen in the bright moonlight, and the fragrance of the mauve-flowered water-mints was as powerful as that of a sun-warmed garden at noon of a summer day.

I had made up my mind that the warmth and quiet beauty of the night were sufficient excuse for staying abroad until it was time to catch the first train in the morning, when an elderly wherryman, the strong odour of whose pipe overpowered that of the water-mints, approached the staithe, apparently with the intention of boarding a wherry lying moored there. Seeing me, he made some remark on the fineness of the night, adding that as the wind was "fair" he was about to sail his wherry to Lowestoft, where he hoped to arrive before dawn. Hearing that it was my intention to start for the town early next morning, he suggested I should sail with him. He was alone, he said, on the wherry, and if I choose to do so I could turn into his cabin to sleep. The invitation accorded so well with my mood that I had no hesitation in accepting it, and, having boarded the Water-rail, for such was the name of the wherry, it was not long before we had sailed out of the Yare and were making good headway between the straight shores of the New Cut.

My companion's name, I soon learnt, was Joe Larter, and he had been a wherryman on the Broadland waterways for rather more than forty years. Summer and winter he had cruised between Lowestoft and Yarmouth and the inland towns and staithe, carrying cargoes of coal, corn and timber, and he knew every wherry afloat on the rivers and the history of nearly every hulk that lay rotting on the boatyards and the ronds. While he leant on the tiller, keeping, by almost imperceptible movements, the wherry's stem in the middle of the stream, he told me many strange things concerning the river and marshland life of the Broadland—how an old windmill in which a marshman had been crushed to death between its wooden cogwheels had ever afterwards been looked upon as haunted; how a black wherry, sailed by a man who never showed himself in the daytime, had for many months cruised on the rivers and finally gone down in the midst of Breydon; how a mad girl had lived in a fisherman's abandoned house-boat near Meredike until she was carried away by the waters of a great flood; and how a wherryman had fired his gun at and killed a marshman who was carrying a lantern across the marshes, having mistaken the lantern for a "marsh-fire" or Will-o'-th'-Wisp. Asked whether he believed in the stories of haunted windmills and unseen wherryman, he seemed disinclined to give a direct

answer. "He wouldn't like to say what was true and what warn't. He'd seen strange things himself when he'd been sailing at night on th' rivers—things he couldn't account for now." What did I think of a big ball of fire floating in the air over the marshes, and stopping on a wherry's mast-head, where it burnt with a bluish flame, like a salted fire? And what did I think of a fisherman who could sail his boat straight in the teeth of a storm and whom the birds followed as they did the ships at sea?

This was not the first time I had heard of "The Fisherman," as he is called by the men of the marshes, and the wherryman's question reawakened the interest I had always felt in the strange stories of that phantom cruiser. Often I had heard of men who had encountered "The Fisherman"—had seen, in stormy weather, his black-sailed punt flitting over the grey waters and in and out among the amber reed shoals of the broads, followed by screaming flocks of gulls, whose white wings seemed to bear them right through the dark canvas of the fisherman's sail. But I had never yet met a man who himself had seen this strange and inexplicable sight; so it was with no little curiosity as to what the answer might be that I asked the wherryman whether he had ever met with the ghostly voyager.

"Well," he said, "people may believe me or they mayn't; it makes no differs to me, for what I see wi' my own eyes is enough for me, if it ain't for other folks."

"It 'ull be sixteen year come next January that I had to lay for over a week at Hickling Staithe a-cause of my mate Jimmy Wilgrass being taken queer through drinking deek (ditch) water. We were sailing th' Wigeon then, an almost new wherry belonging to owd Fokes of Coltishall, and we had a cargo of corn aboard which we were to take to Yarmouth. For three or four days Jimmy was that bad I thowt he would hev died; but arter that he got better, and th' doctor from Stalham said as how, if he had no set-back, we might start on th' Friday, which was just a week arter he was took queer. But on th' Friday morning, when I looked out o' th' cabin to see what th' weather was like, it was a-blowing that hard from th' nor'rard that, although it was a fair wind for us, I thowt I'd wait another day, so that Jimmy might be a bit stronger afore he got to work agin. Howsum-dever, just afore shutting-in-time th' wind settled down into little more than a strong breeze, and as Jimmy said as how he felt nearly all right agin, we got th' wherry out o' th' staithe deek by th' time th' mune was up and were sune running down th' broad. But we hadn't scarcely got into th' channel afore Jimmy felt th' cowl wind so much that he had to turn into th' cabin and crouch up agin th' stove to keep hisself from shivering, so I knew that for that v'yage I should hev to look arter everything myself."

"I could see th' channel-posts, clear enough in the mune-light; but when I had got about halfway down th' broad a big cloud hid th' mune, and when it became clear agin I caught sight of a small sail coming round th' bend out of Whiteslea. I didn't pay much heed to it, thinking as how it was some gunner who had been out arter duck at flight-time; but when I looked agin for th' sail I found it was right out in th' middle of th' channel. Then I says to myself, 'Why, how th' nation did you get there so sune, wi' th' wind dead agin you?' But supposing my eyes had deceived me when I first saw th' sail, and heving pretty well as much as I could do to look arter th' wherry, I let th' matter slip from my mind for a while, and sung out to Jimmy asking him how he was gitting on below."

"It can't hev been a minute later when I had sich a turn as I never want to hev agin. Th' Wigeon was running free afore th' wind, and right ahead of her was a long black gun-punt,

carrying a lug which looked big enough for a boat twice her size, and coming straight for th' wherry afore th' wind. Yes; afore th' wind, as sure as I'm alive. There was th' wind right behind th' Wigeon, and yet there was th' punt with her sheet slackened and th' sail as full as th' wherry's, and on th' point of her gaff there was a light like a star. What was a-steering her I couldn't see for a minute a-cause of her sail; but as she came towards th' Wigeon she fared to be almost lifting herself out o' th' water. I felt a kind o' numbness come over me, and I was fixed where I stood; but just then th' mune shone out bright and I saw over th' little light on th' gaff a big bird a-floatin' along—a bird like a big black swan—while behind it was a flock of smaller birds, all a-piping and a-screaming like a flock o' kitties" (black-headed gulls) "when a hawk comes near their nests. It fared to me that th' night turned colder than ever I'd known a night to be afore; but to save my life I couldn't hev moved nor said a word. But I remember feeling th' wind at my back all th' while and seeing th' little flag at my mast-head pointing straight down th' broad.

"I felt sure that in a second or two th' wherry would dash into th' punt; but I couldn't shift th' tiller an inch, and just as we were within a wherry's length of each other th' punt went off a little to wind'ard of th' Wigeon and passed her within a yard or two of her side. Then I saw sitting at th' stern of th'

punt th' oldest-looking man, or ghost of a man, you could think or dream of. His hair was as white as snow and hung down over his shoulders: his beard was white and fared to reach to th' floor of th' punt. His hat was a curious peak-topped one sich as I'd never seen afore, and over his shoulders hung th' rags of an owd dark cloak. His face was as white as his hair, and as he steered th' punt by th' wherry, he stared straight afore him, looking as though he hadn't moved from where he was a-sitting for a hundred years. It was th' face of a dead man. I couldn't take my eyes off it; but just as th' punt got alongside th' wherry the wind went right about all of a sudden and I was almost thrown off my feet. Th' smack of th' sail brought Jimmy out of th' cabin all in a fright, for he thowt we had run on to th' rond; but a moment later the wind was behind us agin, and we were running down towards Whiteslea in th' clear munelight, and nowhere on th' broad was there a sign of another sail than ours to be seen.

"What was it I saw? Well, I say it was 'Th' Fisherman,' and, say what they may, folks 'ull never persuade me it was owt else. And I know other men as has seen him, though they don't talk much about it. I heard my father say that his grandfather once saw 'Th' Fisherman,' and that was over a hundred years ago. I know no more about him. I've seen him once and I never want to see him agin."

W. A. DUTT.

FROM THE FARMS.



W. Reid.

HEAVY WORK ON THE HILLSIDE

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SHORTHORNS IN NORTHUMBERLAND.

ON March 20th Mr. John Thornton and Co. will have in hand an important sale of shorthorns at Hulne Park, Alnwick. They are shorthorns from the famous herd owned by the Duke of Northumberland. About seventy animals will be included in the catalogue, forty being cows and heifers and thirty bulls. There is not much need to speak about the herd, which is one of the finest in the country. In it Mr. Bell's famous bull Baron Abbotsford has been freely used, and among the other sires are Scottish Mint from Collynie, Red Clipper and Baron Weetwood by Baron Abbotsford. Many of the cows and heifers are good enough to be made winners at the coming shows, and as nearly the whole of the youngest generation of bulls is to be put up to auction, it is unnecessary to say that among them are many very promising animals. On the day after the same auctioneers will dispose of the surplus of Mr. William Bell's herd at Ratcheugh, near Longhoughton Station. Mr. Bell's herd has been increasing in size during the four years that have elapsed since the last sale took place, thanks a great deal to the influence on the herd of Baron Abbotsford. No fewer than

forty-six animals of his blood will be sold at this sale, thirty-five cows and heifers and eleven bulls. Among the bulls is Lord Remenham 16th, bred by the Hon. W. F. D. Smith out of the Barmpton Rose cow Rosedale Rosette 2nd. Another bull, Master Millicent, was second last year at the Northumberland and Durham shows, and should command a good price. There is every likelihood that this will turn out to be a notable and important sale.

TREE PLANTING AT GRAVETYE MANOR.

"Recently, when staying with Mr. Robinson on his beautiful estate in Sussex," writes a correspondent, "I had an opportunity of seeing the woodlands, and was interested in their healthy condition and the sensible way in which experimental tree planting has been carried out. In dealing with the newer and rarer conifers, we too often find single specimens dotted about here and there and planted in specially-prepared ground; but not so at Gravetye, where a small wood of each has been formed under the most natural conditions, and where no interference with the original soil has been permitted. Thus treated, we find many of the best species of abies, picea and pinus, as well as the cedars, Japanese larch and hosts of other likely kinds. Two breadths of the Japanese larch show better their value for ornamental and

woodland planting than anything I have seen before, and the beautiful, warm cinnamon tint of the younger bark has perhaps no equal for colouring among coniferous trees, being approached only by that of the top shoots of the deciduous cypress when seen at its best. When fully established the growth of the Japanese larch is remarkable, and we measured several in the Gravetye woods that exceeded 38in. in length, and in a four year old plantation the trees averaged fully 8ft. in height. The Japanese larch would seem to prefer a loose rocky bottom with light loam atop. Plantations of the Austrian and Corsican pine have done remarkably well, some of these formed fourteen years ago being about 30ft. high, and showing by their fresh and healthy appearance that they are quite at home on the soil at Gravetye. The larch and Scotch fir grow quite as freely, and will be valuable crops, particularly the former, at no very distant date. The area of the plantations at Gravetye has been greatly increased since Mr. Robinson bought the estate, particularly in the way of planting evergreen kinds, the original woods being all deciduous, with the accompanying dull and cheerless aspect during the winter months. Coppice woods are being gradually converted into high woods—a wise action, not only when we consider the falling market for underwood, but its general unsuitability for estate effect. Well-arranged groups of the golden willow have a telling effect at Gravetye, and cause one to wonder why so beautiful a tree, and one that is cheap and readily cultivated, is not oftener found in our parks and grounds."

SOIL INOCULATION AND THE RESULTS.

In the course of the year we hope to publish letters from many correspondents telling us what has been done in the way of soil inoculation and the results. At the moment we have a letter before us for which we are indebted to Professor Bottomley. The writer says that last year she tried the nitrate mixture for sweet peas with great success. She says: "I inoculated half a row

and left the other half alone, and the contrast was wonderful. The peas that were not inoculated were quite a fortnight later, though planted a week before the others, and they always looked starved and weakly. Ours is quite a new garden. This time last year it was nothing but gorse and heather, and the soil is terribly poor." For the benefit of those who are promoting these experiments we hope that as many of our readers as possible will tell us the results of any trials they have made.

SPRING PLOUGHING.

So far the present season has been a remarkable one. During January and February arrears of work accumulated very greatly on the farm, and for weeks there was very little the men could be set to do except carting out manure; indeed, that work is still going on merrily. On the large potato grounds especially, where great crops depend on the liberality of the manuring, the carts are still busily at work. But the ordinary labour of the spring is not yet as forward as it should be. Ploughing was prevented by two causes—the hard frosts and the excessive rains. Even as we write, on March 12th, much land in the Southern Counties is so hard bound with frost as to be impregnable to the plough, while from the North we hear that winter weather of the most pronounced type is prevailing. From Yorkshire up to the Lothians the land has been swept by keen and biting winds, and in some parts of Scotland snowfalls have taken place, the like of which have not been known for more than twenty years. It is no wonder that under these circumstances vegetation is almost at a standstill. Scarcely has a tree begun to put out a green leaf, and the crops that have stood all winter show far fewer signs than usual of that early growth which usually comes with the advance of spring. In a word, although the calendar tells us we are in the middle of March, the weather still proclaims us to be in mid-winter.

THE CLIFFORD'S INN ROOM.

THE woodwork of a small wainscoted room, about 15ft. by 20ft., lately removed from Clifford's Inn, has been set up in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and is an admirable example of the style which prevailed when Sir Christopher Wren was at the zenith of his fame and influence. Wren is the personification of the architectural and decorative arts in England during the reign of four of her

Sovereigns. During his early life the arts had languished—stifled by the dominance of an all-pervading Puritanism. His spirit and his imagination, as much as the body of his uncle the bishop, had been imprisoned throughout the period of Cromwellian ascendancy.

Beginning his creative career after such severe repression, and amid the reckless extravagance and undisciplined vitality



of the Court of the restored Charles, his art might well have suffered by contact with such coarse and voluptuous influences. But his was too fine and varied a nature for that. Grandeur, elaboration, sumptuousness it possessed, but, with them, restraint, chasteness, delicacy. He was not merely the enthusiastic artist imbued with admiration for the florid splendour of the recently completed St. Peter's at Rome, and for the crowded richness of the French work under Louis XIV.; he was also the Fellow of All Souls', bred to classic fastidiousness and finish; the President of the Royal Society, learned in the exact sciences. And so, to our advantage who still possess so much of his work, his exuberance was tempered with precision, his gorgeousness with grace.

In its modest way the room at the museum is as complete a type of this spirit as is, in its vastness, the great church of

St. Paul. How good in proportion, how thoughtful in line, how elegant in detail, how clean in workmanship are the chimney-piece and doorways. The former, as the pre-eminent piece, is given a side to itself facing the two windows, and receives the most elaborate treatment. At the top, starting from the owner's coat of arms which it mantles, is carving of the Grinling Gibbon school, its individual fruits and flowers naturally carved, yet the whole piece ordered and disciplined into a decorative composition which richly enshrines the broad panel where the choicest picture would hang. Below the shelf the same idea of enclosing a space—this time the hearth—is carried out in severer and more conventional scrollwork, while a broad moulding of crisp and nervous acanthus pattern ends the woodwork and frames the marble. The same acanthus treatment forms the chief detail of the cornice and of the architraves of two of the doorways. Of these there



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THE DOORWAY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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CARVED MANTEL-PIECE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

are four; one pair with elaborate broken pediments, winged Cupids' heads and enriched mouldings; the other pair with plain curved pediments and simpler detail. The former face each other centrally, while the latter occupy the less light and important point where the two sides join the window end. Beyond these five pieces the rest is simple. The large, raised panels, excellent in grain and texture, are the appropriate and restful background to the wrought work. Ample plain surface of balanced and satisfying proportions, relieved by ornament of such fine quality, yet restrained quantity, as to delight without wearying the eye—this, surely, is the highest aim of architectural design, and it is reached in no slight degree in this room.

Not that it can claim Wren as its direct progenitor. He inspired it, no doubt, but he did not design it. A multitude of churches and palaces, of colleges and hospitals, of halls and houses were emanating from his busy brain, and the obscure tenant of a set of chambers in one of the secondary Inns of Court would not apply direct to the Leviathan of his age, however exceptionally he proposed to decorate his sitting-room. That it was an exceptional case is clear to anyone who looks at the accompanying illustrations and compares them with his recollection of the appearance of any of the ordinary rooms at the Temple or at Gray's, at Lincoln's or at Clifford's, which he may have occupied or entered. Actuated by what motive of art or of expense, of

beauty or of vanity, this particular tenant clothed his bare walls with such elaborate workmanship, we know not; but the personal touch of the carved coat of arms has revealed to us his identity.

Far away in a remote corner of Cornwall, the Fal estuary sweeps in a semi-circle round the stretch of land which forms the parish of Philligh. Here, on a small estate, was "seated" under Edward III. a certain John Penhalow de Penhalow, and here his descendants continued to be born, married and buried for 400 years, as tombstone and register show. But when Gilbert—who hailed from stately Trelissick, on the other bank of the estuary—wrote his *Survey of Cornwall* in 1830, the Penhalow name no longer survived, but was represented, through the female line, by a Penhalow Peters. The scions of the lesser county families of Cornwall were an eager and adventurous race in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as witness the prevalence of "Tre, Pol and Pen" in our naval, political and legal history during those 200 years. And so we find, in the records of Clifford's Inn, that a John Penhalow was, on the fifth day of February in the year 1674, admitted to a set of chambers in No. 3 building in that Inn. The spirit of rebuilding was then strong in London, even in such parts as the Great Fire had spared, and Clifford's Inn was not backward in the work. Together with others of its fellows, No. 3 began to be re-edified in 1686, not, it would seem, wholly at the corporate expense, but partly also out of the privy purse of its members who tenanted its premises. Thus we read that in 1688, the new work being complete, John Penhalow was admitted to two sets of chambers in No. 3, not merely for his own life, but for two lives beyond, "in consideration of his interest in the old chamber, and of the money he hath laid out in rebuilding the said chamber." For twenty-eight years John enjoyed his panels, and when he was no more, his brother and executor, Benjamin, nominated himself as second life tenant, and was succeeded in 1722, for the third and last life interest, by John Rogers. Who he was and what he did, and who followed as occupiers of the said chambers, and what they did, I know not, except that they added coat upon coat of paint to the wainscoting, all of which it needed infinite pains to boil, burn and scrape off and out of the elaborate carvings when they passed into the possession of the museum. For, a few years ago, it pleased the benchers in their wisdom—or otherwise—to sell their freehold to some commercially minded purchasers, who held an auction of any valuable movables, among which were included these panels. This was heard of at the museum, who sent representatives. A penknife soon revealed that the much-bedaubed wood was of oak, with cedar-wood for the added carved work, and ultimately this lot

was knocked down to the museum bidder for £606 7s. 6d. It was then that, in the desire to discover the history of the new purchase, the coat of arms attracted attention, and was found to be "Penhalow quartered with Penwarne." Penhalows were sought for. Extinct in Great Britain, they were found in America as the descendants of one Samuel Penhalow, who took ship to New England in the very year, 1686, when his cousin John was busy rebuilding No. 3, and it is to the research of Mr. C. J. Penhalow that I owe much of the information I am able to give as to the "Penhalow Panels." Who ordered and paid for them is now clear enough, but the more interesting question of who designed and executed them must, I fear, remain unanswered. In so classic a time as Wren's, when definite principle and strict convention were laid down for due observance, there was little scope for that individual and original handling on the part of lesser men which characterise the Gothic age—the style we call Wren's, the ornamentation we call Gibbon's, because they were the leaders, and the followers were constrained by the prevailing spirit to avoid outbursts of independence and obtrusion of self. And so the identity of the worker, even when his name may appear in contemporary record, is seldom revealed by any special characteristic of brain or hand. His creations merely belong to the school of Wren—a school large in numbers and achievement. The double event of the restoration of 1660 (which revived and fanned the love of the arts) and of the Great Fire of 1666, which, in London, gave such scope and impetus to their practice, multiplied the class of skilful handicraftsmen in the City itself, and brought many an ambitious country lad to town. Thus Philip Wood left his native Suffolk, where, in a prosaic utilitarian carpenter's shop, he found little outlet for the skill in carving which he felt himself to possess. Refused by foremen, he hung about the works at St. Paul's until even Wren noticed his constant presence and asked him what he had been wont to carve. "Troughs," blurted out the bashful youth. "Troughs," exclaimed the indignant architect of the noblest building of his day. "Go home and carve me a sow and pigs." And Philip took him at his word. He spent that last guinea which such a hero invariably possesses on a block of pear wood, and carved the sow and pigs, which, when Wren perceived, he was for a moment silent, observing its excellence, and then said, "Young man, I engage you." For seven years, under the guidance of Wren, in the companionship of Gibbon, Wood worked at St. Paul's, his native ability chastened and developed by the perfection of his environment.

To such a one, no doubt, John Penhalow entrusted his job, and thus was given to us a little work of art, unsigned indeed, but very charming.

H. AVRAY TIPPING.

SOME LORE OF THE MISTLETOE.

WHEN the heaps of ruddy fruit have been hauled from the orchard to the cider-press, the last golden leaves have fallen away, and the sprinkling of apples that escaped the eyes of the pickers, and were once said to belong to the pixies, have dropped off or been eaten by the birds, here and there, among the lichen-covered branches of the glades that in winter look so sombre and dark, a bunch of yellow foliage may still be seen. The farmer casts his eye on these golden pearl-spangled boughs. There is one on the old Horner tree, "a goodish bough," will do for the house. Another, better still, on the Taunton Black, will "just about please the missus" to send to London to John's wife. And two or three more, not so good, will do for—"zomebody or 'nother."

But should the orchard be a little quiet or remote a doubt still hangs over the future destination of these mistletoe boughs. Some higgler or carrier driving by of an early morning may see a chance to draw his safe old nag to the roadside and clamber over the hedge. Thus the "goodish bough" finds its way to the market town or to the hall of some mansion on the road. Or a labourer or boy on the farm may slip into the orchard after dark and "unbeknown" carry away every twig. There is no longer any ceremony about the cutting of this sacred plant. It is an article of commerce now; yet, not being regarded as a crop, it offers an inviting opportunity for the picking up of a stray shilling. And the boughs that supply the great cities are for the most part imported from Normandy.

Of the cutting of the mistletoe by the Druids in this island we may read in Pliny. At the beginning of winter, possibly at All Hallow, this great rite was performed. With dance and song the Druids led the way to the sacred oak upon which the mistletoe was growing. The plant can rarely take root on so hard a wood, and its presence may have been the reason for the consecration of the individual tree. The parasite is extremely long-lived and ready to outlive its host. Cutting only makes it shoot the stronger. The smallest thread of root will grow, and it is almost impossible to get rid of the plant, without sacrifice of the

limb, from a crevice in which it once springs. Therefore, although not common on the oak, when once established it might be trusted to be permanent. Two white bulls that had never borne the yoke were led into the forest grove and their horns were bound to the holy tree. Then the chief Druid, clad in a white robe, ascended and cut the sacred plant with a golden knife. Another priest standing below caught the falling bough in his robe, so that it might not touch the ground. After this the white bulls were sacrificed to the spirit of the holy tree, and the precious plant was carried away with rejoicings. Some of it was boiled, and a medicine was prepared of such wonderful virtue that it was believed to be a cure for all diseases. Hence the name of All-Heal by which the mistletoe was commonly known for many centuries. But twigs of the plant were also distributed to the people to be hung up over the doorways of their dwellings. It was a powerful amulet to prevent the entrance of evil spirits; but as all diseases were imputed to possession by demons, the belief in its protective influence had foundation in the same idea as its medicinal virtue. It no longer holds a place in the pharmacopœia; but until rural folk ceased to pick herbs and prepare them for themselves and came under the dominion of the patent-medicine man, it was very greatly esteemed. Culpeper affirms that it cures the falling sickness, apoplexy and palsy "very speedily." He also recommends that it should not only be inwardly taken, but hung at the neck. The care exercised in catching the bough when it fell from the tree was rendered imperative by an old belief, an instance of which may be found lingering here and there in an English village even until to-day. There are still people who carry the knuckle-bone of a sheep as a charm against cramp. But it must never have touched the ground. To prevent this it is carefully sewn up in a little bag, so that if by any accident it should fall its usefulness may not be lost. It was once customary with cowkeepers in some districts of this country to take down the mistletoe bough hung up in the house as a Christmas decoration and to give it to the first cow that calved in the New Year. Cattle will eat the plant quite willingly. But it was not for the cow's own good that it was bestowed upon her.

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She had already calved. It was believed that this would avert ill-luck in their calving from all the other cows in the dairy.

Everywhere this strange plant has found a place in legend. When Æneas sought counsel from the Cumaean Sibyl and begged that he might make a journey into hell and learn from his father the fate of his posterity, the prophetess naively explained that it is not the descent into the infernal regions which constitutes the difficulty, but the return therefrom. She commanded him to search in the grove for the tree sacred to Proserpine. Upon it he would find one golden bough which he might rend off feeling assured that another would replace it. Guided by the doves of Venus, he found the tree, and became possessed of the mystic plant. At the sight of it Charon ferried him across the Styx; and he eventually hung it in the entrance to the palace of Pluto.

In Scandinavian mythology Baldur, the god of poetry and eloquence, was slain by an arrow made from the mistletoe. Troubled by a dream of impending death, he confided his doubts to his mother, Frigga. In her alarm she implored the powers of Nature to bind themselves by oath never to harm her son.

Earth, water, air fire and all living things excepting one swore to respect Baldur for ever, and secure from all injury he fought without fear. But Loki, the spirit of evil, out of envy of the excellence of "Baldur the Good," disguised as a woman, sought the friendship of Frigga, and gained her confidence. One insignificant plant growing upon an ancient oak had been passed by, but it was too feeble to do injury. Loki hastened to obtain a wand from the mistletoe and fashioned an arrow. This he carried to Walhalla, where the gods were at their sports. They were throwing missiles at Baldur, and even the hammer of Thor was powerless to do him harm. Hod, the blind god of brute strength, stood by, taking no part because he could not see. Loki gave him the arrow of mistletoe and directed him where to shoot. Thus Baldur was pierced and fell dead, and for the time evil triumphed.

In Brittany the mistletoe has been called "Herbe de la Croix," a name based upon the one Christian legend associated with the plant. It is said that it was once a forest tree which, having supplied the wood from which the cross was made, has since dwindled into a feeble parasite. WALTER RAYMOND.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FIRE PREVENTION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The total destruction by fire of Englemere Lodge, Ascot, last week, is yet another of those deplorable catastrophes demonstrating the futility of trusting to distant fire-engines for protection. From the account in the *Daily Telegraph*, the Ascot fire brigade were on the spot and at work as soon as possible, but not before the fire had got such a firm hold as to defy their efforts. Captain Shaw held that unless a fire was got in hand within a few minutes of its outbreak, the chances were against getting it under control at all, and, of course, in country districts such expedition is practically impossible. In 1902, in a letter to a contemporary, I wrote, "Under the best conditions in rural districts more or less delay is unavoidable in getting a fire-engine to work, and even then it may be practically useless if a fire has got a firm hold at the top of a high structure, especially if there be much wind. Then, again, as is only too well known, such a sudden emergency usually throws those unaccustomed to disturbing incidents into a state of uncontrollable excitement, so that they are running over each other in the desire to be useful, but hinder rather than help. It may be conceded at once that no system will absolutely guarantee immunity from fire, but the best thing is to have an ample storage of water at an elevation that will dominate the highest points of the buildings to be protected, connected to a properly-designed system of mains with hose and jets arranged to command all parts from roof to basement. The advantages of this are that water is always at hand, no engine has to be brought from a distance with the accompanying waste of time in getting to work, no special knowledge is required, any gentleman in the house being able to tell his servant what to do, and so put clear-headed order and control in place of helpless confusion; above all, the extinguisher is instantly available, and what might be a serious conflagration can be stopped long before fire-engines can be set going." Since I wrote the above I do not know how many country mansions have been burned, but I have newspaper cuttings referring to nearly forty, and in most cases the fire had gained the mastery before the available engines could be got to work. As regards engines, too, there is another point usually forgotten, to which attention was called by Mr. Merryweather in a recent correspondence, viz., that fires often originate on an upper floor or in the roof, out of reach of a jet from an ordinary fire-engine. The utmost simplicity and facility of working are of the first importance in arrangements for the prevention of fire, and in my experience I have not yet seen anything to supersede a properly-arranged system of mains and hose under pressure inside the building. Until this becomes more generally adopted it is to be feared that these disastrous conflagrations will continue to occur.—W. T. CHADWIN.

CHANNEL ISLAND CATTLE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I shall be greatly obliged if you can inform me of any book, in the COUNTRY LIFE Library or elsewhere, dealing with Channel Island cattle and stating how Guernseys, Alderneys and Jerseys differ from each other, and where pedigree herds of the above-mentioned cows are kept in this country.—R. O., Monmouthshire.

[A great deal about Jerseys will be found in "Economies in Dairy Farming," by Ernest Mathews, in the COUNTRY LIFE Library. The Guernsey is a larger cow than the Jersey, a fact usually attributed to its having been used more as a beast of burden, and thereby developing greater bone. Alderney is a term that by old-fashioned people was used to designate any animal that came from the Channel Islands, and some old-fashioned people still call their Jerseys Alderneys. Famous pedigree herds are kept by Lord Rothschild at Tring Park; Mr. A. Miller-Hallett, Goddington, Kent; the Marquis of Winchester, Lady de Rothschild and others. Well-known owners of Guernseys are Lady Tichborne of Alresford, Mr. W. A. Glynn of Seaview, Isle of Wight, the Earl of Ashburnham of Ashburnham Place, Sussex, and Mr. E. A. Hambro of Hayes Place, Kent.

THE BRAY OF THE ASS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sorry if Mr. Aflalo has occasion to think I was hard on him in my former letter. I did not mean to be so. The phrase "*even Mr. Aflalo*," was only used in allusion to that gentleman's self-confessed inability to

distinguish shades of emotion in the different brays of asses, and was not meant in any sense of general comparison. Referring to the article which called forth my comment, I see that Mr. Aflalo's statement reads: "The bray of an ass during its courtship is not, *so far as we know*, very different to that which it utters before rain, or when getting a thrashing." (The italics are mine.) The exact significance of the word "*we*" is a little obscure. Perhaps Mr. Aflalo is using it in the royal or editorial sense. Now as to his alleged instance in support of his assertion that the ass will bray, on occasion, when punished. He noted the instance "in this town, and not more than a month ago." Here, again, is obscurity, but perhaps immaterial, viz., as to the locality of "this town," as his letter bears no place-name. Perhaps the donkeys of "this town" are thinner-skinned than they are commonly; but, with great respect to Mr. Aflalo, I am still sceptical as to the braying being a result of the "thwacking," especially in view of the writer's confession that he has "not been a very close observer of these animals." It is very easy for a casual spectator to be mistaken in a case of this sort. Exactly why, I hope to show in a future letter. I should be interested to know, too, whether or not this supposed instance was the first that had come under Mr. Aflalo's notice, as if so, it obviously, in the matter of date, still leaves his first statement "in the air." I thank Mr. Aflalo for the close attention he has been kind enough to give my poor script, and shall rejoice to reflect that it has had the effect of directing notice to a detail of natural history study, interesting, if humble.—JACQUES L'ANIER.

BIRD-TABLES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I think my own plan is as simple as any I have seen mentioned, and attracts a very large and mixed company of birds. An iron garden table, painted, is placed in the verandah close to the window; on it a small enamelled basin of fresh water. Always after breakfast and luncheon I put a good supply of crumbled bread and chopped scraps. The table is regularly washed and kept quite clean. In severe weather I add a cocoanut and a piece of suet. The birds are fed both summer and winter; their restaurant is a source of great interest, especially when in the spring the parents bring their young families and introduce them to the club. The water seems to be as much appreciated as the food. A large pan of water is placed not far off where the birds can bathe. I do not keep any cats.—A. C. J.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—We have tried various kinds of foods for our birds and find that bread-and-butter is decidedly the favourite. Our birds are fed at an upper window of a three-storey house, old ivy on one side. We started by fixing a line across for hanging cocoanuts, etc., on; also put up a couple of shelves at the side for bread-crumbs. We soon had many visitors—great, coal and blue tits, robins, chaffinches—and sometimes unwelcome ones, in the shape of crows and jackdaws. One day a big rat climbed up the ivy to investigate what was going on. He soon cleared the shelves, and perceiving a marrow-bone hanging on the line, reached out to seize it from the top shelf, but his weight overbalancing his perch, shelves and rat speedily fell into the area. A breakback trap was set on the window-sill, but the victim next morning was a jackdaw; his friends raised a great outcry, and came no more for a long time. Next night the rat was caught, and several others afterwards. It was amusing, when a piece of bread-and-butter was hung on the line, to see the blue tits carefully picking all the butter off. When nesting-time came the coal tits gradually disappeared, but the blue tits, in due time, brought their families to share the feast, and occasionally arrived a great tit also. The birds continued coming all the summer, and disappeared rather suddenly at the end of September; they did not return till after Christmas. In the middle of January new visitors arrived—a pair of goldcrests, delightful, dainty little creatures, not at all shy. They seem greatly fascinated with the bread-and-butter, which we cut in tiny dice and keep on the shelves. None of the birds will now touch cocoanut, meat, etc. One and all say there is nothing like bread-and-butter, especially the butter. Our bird party has been a source of great amusement and interest to the invalid who inhabits the room. When the snow was on the ground I found that a very good food for scattering under the trees was coarse Indian meal soaked in boiling water, with a lump of dripping stirred in; except the thrushes, who preferred cut up potatoes, all the birds appreciated this.—MARY C. HOPKINS, Lucan, Ireland.

CUT BY A DOG!

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—A few years ago it was the misfortune of myself and my small family to be strangers in a little place, not far from one of our large manufacturing towns, which might be called semi-suburban, as it lacked all the advantages of being nearer town and partook of but few of those incidental to life in the country—such as neighbourly friendliness to newcomers, and others needless to mention here. My children were, and are, exceedingly fond of animals, like most of their kind; but not having on our small estate—about 100 square yards, including the lower part of the house—much convenience for keeping any of their own, they were by and by greatly delighted at meeting and exchanging civilities on the road with a dog which appeared to be leading a most independent existence. Anyhow, he was very frequently to be met wandering about the adjacent country alone. The acquaintance proved mutually agreeable, and though for some time the ownership of the dog remained a mystery, Carlo—for it was found after much experiment that he answered to this name—attached himself a good deal to my young ones; none of us ever dreaming that the circumstance could possibly give offence to anyone, seeing that apparently no one else took much interest in the animal. The children were addicted to long walks in the country, and occasionally would take out with them a midday lunch, remaining away, when weather permitted, until their tea hour. Carlo became accustomed to join in these excursions and share in the lunch, but proved the disinterested nature of his affection by being contented with what for a dog was but a simple meal, and possibly not always to his taste. Eventually we had found out to whom Carlo belonged, though his owner ignored our existence. It transpired that, in spite of absence in town all day preventing this gentleman from giving any time to the dog himself, except on summer evenings and Sundays, and in spite of there being no one at home whom it interested in the least to do so, he yet objected strongly to anyone else taking over the duty. Or could it be that he considered the companionship and consequent influence of our children to be of a pernicious nature and calculated to lead astray an otherwise estimable animal? I know not, as he never condescended to speak on the subject to either them or me. However, it presently became evident that he had, so to speak, put his foot down and forbidden Carlo to stray in our direction; and I have often seen him, in his disengaged moments, prospecting anxiously, but furtively, round our house, evidently in search of the absent dog, though it happened that at such times Carlo was not likely to be found in our vicinity, the children being otherwise engaged. Presently a time came when, alas! the poor doggie was hardly ever to be seen out, and when he did appear there was evidence of his having broken loose from confinement, much consequent excitement following on his part and that of the children. But his visits became rarer and rarer, and poor Carlo was heard of as being tied up in a small yard, generally making piteous efforts to get away. These were sad times, but nothing could be done in the matter. What eventually became of him I do not know, for providentially we were able to leave the district; but one Sunday, not long before this took place, our entire little family was out for a walk, when we perceived him advancing most sedately. Much joy struck up in the heart of our children, and we elders awaited results with interest, but little anticipation of what followed. As may be inferred from the aforesaid sedateness, Carlo was out with his master, the latter walking behind with a friend. As they approached, instead of the excitement counted on by the children, the dog was seen to have his tail resolutely held between his legs; and as he passed us, absolutely no greeting whatever took place on his part, the only mitigation of the snub



A LANCASHIRE COCKLE-MAN.

river Alt about five years ago, when he pluckily saved two Militiamen who had come from Altcar Camp. The photograph was taken as he was returning home laden with cockles.—JOHN HART.

A WALNUT TREE LEGEND.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Nearly every castle and ancient mansion in the country has some legend or tradition concerning it, and Husbands Bosworth Hall, in the county of Leicester, for generations the country seat of the Turville family,



HUSBANDS BOSWORTH HALL, 1795.

is no exception. The legend in connection with this old mansion was that when the old walnut tree in front of the Hall died, the race of the Turvilles would also come to an end. This family dates back to Richard Turville who died in 1415, and with the death of Miss Mary Fortescue Turville (sister of the late Sir Francis Turville, K.C.M.G.), which took place in April, 1906, the family of Turville in the direct line became extinct. In 1905 the walnut tree, although dead at the top, had leaves on all its lateral branches, but in 1906, when the photograph was taken, there was not a single leaf out on it, so that the legend was fulfilled to the very year. Bosworth Hall has now passed to Mr. Oswald Petre, who, through his mother, Lady Gwendoline Petre, is distantly connected with the Turville family. The tree is shown on the first photograph, which is copied from an old engraving, dated 1796, in Nicholls' "History of Leicestershire," and even at this date it was of mature growth. In the library a Psalter of very great value has recently been discovered dating from about 950.—B.

AN EFFECTIVE HERON-SCARER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reply to your correspondent, Sydney Holland, I have been troubled with a heron coming every day after my trout. I got an Arblecote Bird Scarer from Palmer and Co., 5, Victoria Street, Westminster, price 8s., dressed it in old clothes, and I have never seen a heron since. The scarer is a full-sized figure of a man in galvanised wire.—ALBERT SIMPSON.

"COCK OF THE WALK"

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can any of your readers tell me if instances have often been noticed of a wild pheasant—or rather a semi-wild bird—being "master" of a poultry-yard? The one I saw was reared in captivity and brought up with the poultry, whose run is in the open and in a quiet, wild spot. Passing by the other day I saw a cock pheasant chase away two fine cocks of the domestic fowl, and after beating first one and then the other to a safe distance he took possession of the family of hens. The woman in charge of the poultry tells me he is always "master," and frightens away the other cocks.—J. G. A.



THE DEAD TREE IN 1905.